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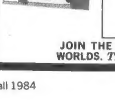

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Editorial

Putting together a magazine on comics can be a complex business, involving the cooperation of the proverbial giant corporations and the "little guy" fan. We thank the generous people who continue to offer help that lets us, in turn, bring you this magazine.

People at Marvel and DC worked diligently to provide information for the Fantastic Four and Supergirl articles in this issue. We'd like to thank (in no particular order) Jim Mooney, Carol Kalish, Peggy May, Peter David, Dennis Jensen, and Rich Howell. We deeply appreciate their help on our assorted projects.

We'd also like to thank Robert M. Overstreet for his continued assistance — this time, in providing the "Cost of Collecting" feature that runs with Ron Goulart's article on *Zip*. Overstreet's *The Comic Book Price Guide* #14 is the standard index and price guide for the comic-book field.

* * *

One way in which we're trying to help comics fans is promoting comics conventions. You'll find a list of coming conventions in this issue. Plan to attend one in your area — especially if you've never tried one before.

If you're planning to put on a convention, let us know the details for our convention calendar. Not only will we list it, we'll also put you on our convention committee mailing list for our ***Pros & Cons*** newsletter. It's an informational sheet designed to ease communications between the convention committees around the nation — with tips and topics of interest to such committees. (If you haven't yet scheduled your first convention but are planning one, we'll send you the current issue of ***Pros & Cons***, if you send us a self-addressed, stamped envelope.)

* * *

We just received a letter from one reader who wondered why we no longer ran columns on the latest comics news. If one reader wondered, there are probably others who do, too. So we'll explain again:

In a quarterly magazine a news column is bound to be dated and error-filled by the time it appears. The best vehicle for comics news would be something published far more often — say, a weekly comics newspaper.

That's why we also produce a weekly comics newspaper, which is chockablock full of the latest information from all the comics publishers, as well as containing background articles about comics and comics collecting. It permits us to tell readers about upcoming titles and about hard-to-get items. It has opinion columns and factual articles, not to mention its monthly clubs list. A sample copy is available free, if you're curious. Just send a postcard to:

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In early June, ***CBG*** received a plug on the syndicated PBS show *Business Report*, when it examined comics as an investment. (A tip of the hat to Larry's Comic Store in Chicago — and kind dealer Larry Charet, who brought ***CBG*** to the reporter's attention!)

Comics are being noticed around America in this year of Donald Duck's 50th birthday. Thanks for joining in the celebration!

Don + Maggie

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The latest ***Comics Collector*** (#3) is of particular interest to me, something few comics-oriented magazines or, for that matter, few *comics* of late can manage.

Of most particular interest was L. Watt-Evans' "Brief History of Pre-Code Horror," regarding which a few comments, quibbles, and addenda offered herewith:

I had at one time a fairly extensive collection of these comics, and, while I'll grant that many of the publishers imitated the EC titles in some fashion or other, the imitation was seldom very thorough, and remarkably *few* of these books featured "hosts" a la the Crypt Keeper & Co. Of Fawcett's half-dozen or so titles, for instance, only two featured hosts. And the Harvey titles, though some of their artists' styles (Nostrand, Lee Ellias) bore more than a passing resemblance to the styles of some of EC's artists, *never* featured hosts. Atlas (Marvel), the outfit that outdid them all in terms of sheer numbers — Gaines himself (in *The Comics Journal* #81) places their output at some *30* titles at a crack, and the estimate is not at all far-fetched — had no hosts, though it did run brief text intros above the splash panels of the stories in its earliest numbers and its cover layouts were designed much like EC's.

I'd also take exception to Watt-Evans' estimation of the quality of Harvey's product. Admittedly, its titles weren't on the level of EC's; but, then, *nobody's* were.

Face it: EC was a one-of-a-kind company, a total maverick in a veritable sea of commercial mediocrity, and *no* competing company ever reached its level of quality in art and plotting. As Watt-Evans points out, none of them really tried. Still, judged against the vast majority of titles that proliferated throughout those early years of the Fifties, I don't think Harvey's entries fare too badly. This, of course, *is* personal opinion, and Watt-Evans is certainly entitled to his.

While many titles (Harvey's *Tomb of Terror* and *Chamber of Chills* among them) copied EC's *(Place)* of *(Horror, Fear, Terror, etc.)* format, some very off-beat, original titles appeared as well, probably through plain necessity — *Spellbound* (Atlas), *Skeleton Hand* (ACG), *Beware!* (two publishers used this one), and (my own personal favorite) *This Magazine Is Haunted* (Fawcett), to name a few. *Witches Tales* sounds more to me like it was swiped from *The Witch's Tale* of radio than EC's "Witch's Cauldron."

I think Watt-Evans' memory's a bit faulty in re EC's graphic depiction of gore and grue, as well. While I can't think of any instances where actual acts of dismembering were shown either, I clearly recall *plenty* of loose members on display — severed heads as auto hood ornaments, hearts wrapped in butcher paper and sent as valentines, even crawling intestines ("Practical Choke" in *Vault of Horror* #30, the story illustrated on the cover by that severed arm hanging from a subway strap)! And, though EC was far from alone in such lapses of taste, theirs were always the most glaring and the most carefully rendered examples. They were, after all, the pioneers of this type of comic-book horror, and they remained the front-runners throughout the trend.

What most other practitioners in the genre, as well as its critics, failed to grasp was the consummate sense of black humor with which these stories were presented. Even when straying well beyond the bounds of propriety, the EC tongue was always planted firmly in cheek. In its finest moments, the EC flair for the absurd was worthy of Roald Dahl (apparently an EC admirer, himself).

While duly noting the often bizarre plotlines that ran rampant through the field, Watt-Evans misses this point entirely. "A most remarkable and unaccountable omission," since this EC trait, like all the others, was widely copied by the other houses — with the expectedly varying degrees of success. None, however, reached the heights of absurdity achieved in such EC gems as "Who Doughnut?" or the unforgettable "Country Clubbing" in *Haunt of Fear*

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#23. (This point was also sorely missed by Stephen King, whose *Creepshow* efforts at emulating EC fell way short of the mark.)

Of the publishers Watt-Evans mentions who "stayed clean," DC is the only valid example — in fact, DC was *so* squeaky clean that most of its stories in the pre-Code numbers of *House of Mystery*, for instance, would have sailed through CCA inspection without a murmur of protest. As often as not, "supernatural" elements in *House of Mystery* tales were explained away at their conclusions as elaborate hoaxes — so elaborate that it frequently made one wonder why the perpetrators of these schemes — "The Pied Piper of the Sea," for instance — didn't just grab a gun and go rob a bank!

Ziff-Davis' horror titles reprinted material from other houses — one number of *Weird Thrillers* reprinted St. John's *Amazing Ghost Stories* #16, featuring "The Widow's Lover." "The Widow" in this story was a guillotine, and the plot concerned a retired executioner who, when he was himself arrested and sentenced for a murder, was granted his last request — the privilege of officiating at his own beheading. Both the Ziff-Davis titles and Quality titles like *Web of Evil* contained more than enough material that, in the hysteria of the times, was found quite objectionable, indeed.

That the elimination of their smaller rival companies may have been an ulterior motive of the major publishers in forming the CCA *is* a possibility — one which, I have to admit, never occurred to me. The slight decline in horror comics sales in '54 can probably be attributed, at least in large measure, to unfavorable media attention, which no doubt resulted in closer parental supervision of what kids spent their dimes on. I see nothing ironic, though, in Dell and Gilberton surviving without the CCA Seal of Approval. Who could object to Bugs Bunny or adaptations of Shakespeare? (Well, Dr. Wertham could, but then . . .) It would have been ironic if *EC* had survived!

Classic horrors like vampires, werewolves, and the Frankenstein Monster being permitted under CCA guidelines if treated "in the classic manner" is a fairly recent development, dating from the early Seventies. Initially, when CCA rules went into effect, such creatures were banned from the comics, along with the titles promising "terror," "horror," and "crime" — even while Sixties small-fry bathed with "Soaky Spookies"

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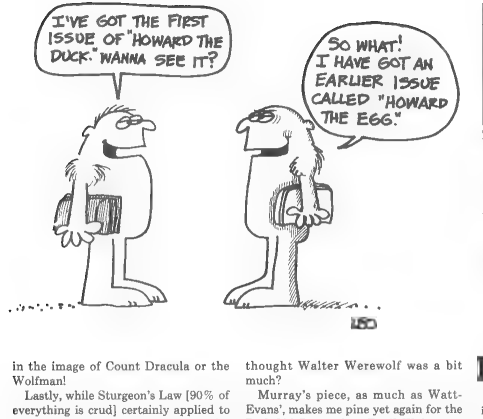

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Lastly, while Sturgeon's Law [90% of everything is crud] certainly applied to the horror comics in spades, it's hardly fair to single them out as an example — the Law, after all, applied equally to the comics field of the time as a whole. With hundreds of comics hitting the stands every month, it's hardly noteworthy that the high standards maintained by a company like EC were not pursued throughout the field. EC, at the height of its popularity, published only five titles a month in a handful of catagories, and horror was its hallmark. Should Westerns, costumed heroes, romance, or any other genre not represented in the "New Trend" books be judged less harshly? How does *Battle Action* (Atlas) stack up next to *Frontline Combat* or *Two-Fisted Tales*? Or, as you point out, Maggie, aside from *Little Lulu* and *Uncle Scrooge*, how many "funny" comics were actually *funny*?

Still, a good overview — and a striking contrast to Will Murray's "I Remember . . . Vandoom!" in the same issue. How did he ever miss "Taboo," the extra-terrestrial mud-monster who turned out to be a criminally insane escapee from his home planet? (In an earlier day, he'd have had a mindless, moldering, but highly animated human corpse beneath all that mud, instead of a brain!) Not only do we meet a troop of *friendly* mud-monsters come to Earth to recapture him — solemnly intoning, "You are *ill*, Taboo!" — but we are treated to their arrival in . . . uh-huh . . . a *muddy flying saucer*! And Evans thought Walter Werewolf was a bit much?

Murray's piece, as much as Watt-Evans', makes me pine yet again for the Bad Old Days when Basil Wolverton turned asylum inmates and their psychiatrists alike into giant crabs, resuscitated mummies left dry husks of their victims by draining their very lifeforces, and Dick Briefer's snaggle-toothed Frankenstein Monster roamed the world unfettered.

The legend of EC has been endlessly chronicled, and, thanks to [publisher Russ] Cochran, its legacy will be preserved in toto. Surely the era produced enough other worthwhile material to warrant a book-length study . . . and maybe some companion volumes reprinting the choicest selections (that issue of *Horrific* on page 47 leads off with a creditable rip-off of Sturgeon's "It") . . . don't tempt me! Like I said back there at the beginning, I *used* to have a sizeable collection — and articles like Watt-Evans' can't help but drive the prices ever upward! Still, if some fan or dealer out there has a largish assortment they'd like to unload at a semi-reasonable "lot" price . . . Good Lord! — choke—

[Actually, there were ***many*** *funny "funny" comic books.*

*Some of them were done by Walt Kelly (****Christmas with Mother Goose*** *and similar titles,* ***Animal Comics***, ***Our Gang***, ***The Brownies***, ***Peter Wheat***, *and the like). Some were done by Dan Noonan (the "Donot" stories in* ***Raggedy Ann & Andy****, for example).*

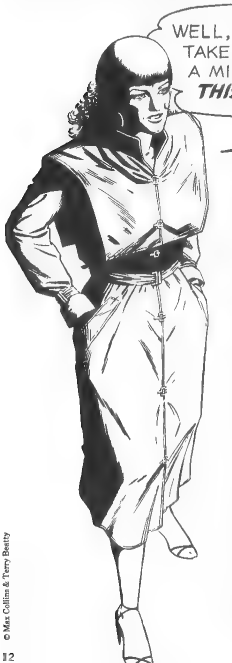
from the Drawing Board

By Terry Beatty

I can't really tell you how you can become a cartoonist, but I can tell you how I did it.

[Terry Beatty is a cartoonist and commercial artist. He is a frequent contributor to ***The Comics Buyer's Guide,*** *and is the co-creator (with Max Collins) of* ***Ms. Tree.****]*

One of the questions I am most often asked at comic-book conventions is, "How did you become a cartoonist?" This question is usually asked by aspiring cartoonists, and what they *really* want to know is how do *they* become cartoonists (though occasionally someone puts an extra emphasis on the word "you," giving the question a slightly different connotation). Since I am asked this question so darned often, I can only assume that there is some interest in the answer — so instead of answering it personally every time it is asked, I'll just set it down in print here. Now when someone asks, I can just hand them a photocopy of this article.



I can't really tell you how *you* can become a cartoonist, but I *can* tell you how *I* did it. Maybe you'll find some hidden clue that will help you in your quest to make it big in the world of comic books . . . Maybe you'll have no interest in the subject whatsoever and skip right to the next article (do not pass "GO," do not collect $200). I get paid for this either way.

For me, the story starts early. I had the good fortune to grow up with three older brothers who all brought home comic books from the local newsstand — *Spider-Man, Sgt. Rock, Hawkman, The Fantastic Four,* and *Dr. Strange* got me reading at an early age (take that, you snobs who think comics have a negative effect on children's reading habits!).

Having been born in 1958, I was just in time for the "Marvel Age of Comics," when there was just no stopping Jack Kirby, Stan Lee, and Steve Ditko. I also had a great time with all those comics from their "Distinguished Competition," when Gil Kane, Carmine Infantino, and Joe Kubert were turning out their best work. I even discovered the great EC artists (Jack Davis, Will Elder and the incredible Wally Wood) through the paperback reprints of *Mad* that my brothers had the good taste to bring home. I loved comics, but I must admit there was one subject that excited me more.

Dinosaurs.

Did I mention that my father was (and still is) an English teacher and at the time was also a librarian? Well, he was. What does this have to do with dinosaurs? I'm getting to that. My father used to bring home books for me from the junior high school library he was in charge of, and the subject I most enjoyed reading about was archaeology. Dinosaurs! Big scaly lizards as big as my house! Keen! Cool! Neat-O! I wanted to be an archaeologist. I was 5 years old. I could spell the word correctly. My kindergarten teacher was amazed.

I was soon informed that archaeologists didn't get to goof around with real *live* dinosaurs, but rather the smelly old skeletons of same. I was crushed. I altered my career goal. I decided I would be Superman instead. I spelled it with an extra "p." My kindergarten teacher was amused.

Then it happened. I was reading a *Green Lantern* comic — the June 1964 issue (#29 for you number-oriented folk) — a comic book which was to alter the course of my life forever (sounds dramatic, doesn't it?). The lead story in the issue was called "Half a Green Lantern Is Better Than None." It was drawn by Gil Kane, and introduced a snazzy-looking villain called Black Hand. None of those things matter.

What matters is the last panel on Page 3. In this particular panel, someone (Kane? The author? The editor?) decided it would be fun to show the cartoonist at his drawing board, sketching a comic-book page, and acting as the narrator of the piece.

© Max Collins & Terry Beatty

Suddenly it hit me. Comic books didn't happen by magic. People created them. People drew them. I was aware that my stated career goal was unrealistic. I had not been born on the planet Krypton (as far as I knew), and thus could never be "Supperman." But now I was armed with a new knowledge. I was aware that there was one person more powerful than all those four-color heroes — the cartoonist! I was determined to be one.

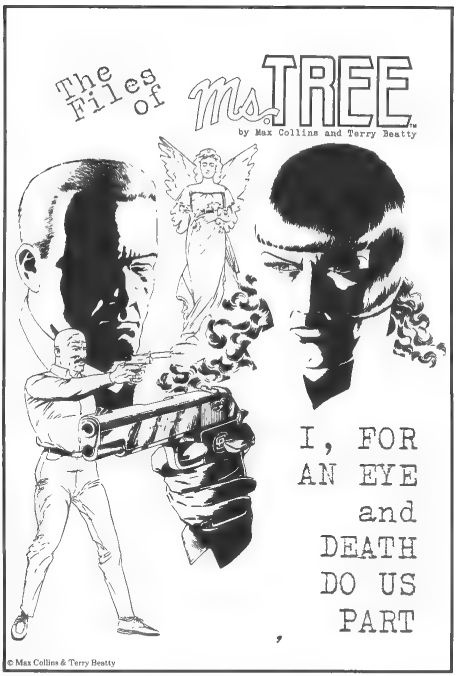
Suddenly it hit me. Comic books didn't happen by magic. People created them.

My teachers tried to talk me out of it for the rest of my school years.

If you want to be a cartoonist, it helps to start early. It also helps to have parents who can be convinced to keep buying you package after package of paper to scribble on. I was lucky. I had parents who supported my creative urges and, I guess, the paper industry. I went through a lot of paper as a kid. You've got to if you want to learn how to draw. It takes a long time. It takes a lot of practice and a lot of study. I'm still learning. And I still use a lot of paper — only now it's bristol board, not the cheapo typing paper my folks started me out on.

It also helps to get your work in print. I started striving towards that goal early. Any chance I had to do a drawing for the school paper — to design an ad for some project my mother's club was involved in — anything — I took it. There are lessons about drawing for publication that you can never learn until you see your work in print. And the sooner you learn those lessons, the better. That's why fanzines which print art by raw talent and little, self-published comics of all sorts are important. You've got to have a training ground to test yourself and learn your craft — and if there isn't one, you've got to create your own.

During my high school days, I got involved with a bizarre little group that called itself "The Friends of Sam Schagnogleeack," or F.O.S.S. for short. F.O.S.S. devoted itself to perpetuating the legend of a mythical fellow student named Sam Schagnogleeack, a student no one had ever seen and who was rumored to always wear a paper sack over his head. We went about this by publishing a little mimeographed "underground" paper — innocent



really, though it did occasionally get us in hot water with the school's administration — especially when we, as seniors, handed out our last, and rather racy, issue on the day the School Board was coming to lunch (most copies of that issue were confiscated, but I have a stack filed away that I plan to hand out at my 10-year high school reunion a few years from now — revenge at last!).

The Schagnogleeack Times was a great opportunity for me to test my skills as a fledgling cartoonist, drawing illustrations of all sorts directly on its mimeograph stencils. I was all set to be my generation's Harvey Kurtzman (or Will Elder — either one would do). I even convinced my art teacher, Dan Kitchen (not to be confused with cartoonist and publisher, Denis Kitchen) to allow me to draw some comic books as a class project (*Denis* Kitchen would publish my *Mad*-inspired comic, *Mod*, some years later).

Two issues of *Schagnogleeack Comics and Goofies* were printed and distributed to my fellow students. I edited and drew most of the first one. My longtime friend Kerry Grady (now an artist with the Container Corporation of America) took the editorial reins for issue #2. Every one of the several hundred copies was collated and stapled by hand — a tiring, but satisfying, process. A third issue was drawn but, alas, was finished too late in the school year to see print. And that's too bad, because I'd learned a lot from the previous books,

and the art for the third book reflected that. Now it seems too amateurish for me to allow it to be printed anywhere — but at the time I was mighty proud of it.

While you would-be cartoonists should try to take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way — giving you more experience and professional credits for your portfolio — you should also be careful about who you deal with and what deals you make. Here's an example . . .

When I was just out of high school, working in radio and hoping to make a career for myself in cartooning someday, my sister-in-law, Susan (Hi, Sue!), found a notice tacked onto a bulletin board. The notice read, "WANTED — Comic-book artist to illustrate educational comic," and listed a phone number. I didn't waste much time calling.

The party on the other end of the phone turned out to be a student at the Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa. "Melvin" (not his real name) wanted to publish a series of comic books which would promote the chiropractic method of health care, and feature a (believe it or else) superpowered chiropractor he insisted on calling "Backman." These comics would be sold to chiropractors all over the country as giveaways for their younger clientele.

I was promised a hefty percentage of the profits from this venture — profits which Melvin assured me would be substantial. I accepted. That was where I made my mistake.

I wrote, lettered, drew, and executed hand-wrought color separations for two issues of *Backman — Agent of Balance.* (Nice title, eh?) I also designed two posters, a T-shirt, a coloring book, and a fan-club kit. I had finished the pencils for issue #3 and hadn't received a single penny from Melvin. I asked to be paid. Melvin skipped town.

The printers published and distributed issue #2 without telling me about it (I discovered this a year after the fact, when I found the one-and-only copy of #2 that I own). And that was the last anyone heard of "Backman." The pencils for #3 are still sitting, un-inked, in my files — and the original art for the previous issues is still (as far as I know) in Melvin's hands. And I still haven't been paid a plugged nickel (or a red cent) for all the work I did.

So what's the lesson to be learned from all this, kiddies? Here 'tis: *Never* work for *just* a percentage — always get a guaranteed per-page rate for your work. And get your agreement on paper.

You shouldn't take on a *major* project without a contract or letter of agreement. Take chances — but don't let yourself get taken.

Never work for a percentage — always get a guaranteed per-page rate for your work. And get your agreement on paper.

Oh, one more thing about *Backman — Agent of Balance:* Those of you lucky (?) enough to own a copy of the comic will note that Max Collins is credited with working on the book. To set things straight, all Max did was look over my writing and make a few corrections and suggestions. To his undying embarrassment, I put his name on the darned thing. If I had to do it over again, I wouldn't even put *my* name on the project.

What do you do when you are determined to be a professional cartoonist, but all the samples you send to the publishing companies keep coming back with those oh-so-polite letters of rejection? You could give up and go to work in a shoe store, never to draw another line again — or you could explore your

other options.

I'll tell you what I did when I found myself in just that situation.

Self-syndication.

Back in 1979, Max Collins and I put together a package aimed at the small-town newspapers and weekly tabloid shoppers of this country — a weekly page of comics we called (Ta-Daaaa!) *The Comics Page*. We did our research, saw that there were jillions of such papers across the land and that these papers were not being offered the kind of entertainment package we could give them. We created a balanced page with six different features, sent samples, made phone calls, worked our respective rear ends off, and wound up with a list of subscribers (most notably *The Chicago Reader*) which kept the feature going for a year.

In the end, Max and I proved ourselves to be better at writing and drawing than we were at running a business, and *The Comics Page* went the way of all flesh. But all was not lost, because *The Comics Page* led to bigger and better things — more on that later.

Comics fandom.

I avoided getting involved in comics fandom for the longest time. I collected comics. I subscribed to *The Buyer's Guide for Comic Fandom* (as ***The Comics Buyer's Guide*** was originally called). I used up reams of paper drawing comic-book characters, but I never sent any of my drawings to any of the comics fan publications. I was going to be a pro, I told myself. I wasn't about to be labeled a "fan artist."

But with *The Comics Page* happening, I figured it was safe to take a big dive into fandom's pool. Besides, it wouldn't hurt for me to make myself known to fandom-at-large. *The Comics Page* had a large readership, but the readers of it weren't necessarily *comic-book fans* — the people I would be counting on to buy all those comic books I intended to draw one day.

And so I started writing and drawing for *The Buyer's Guide*, creating a stir with the outrageous comments in my column, and tipping my hat to all the cartoonists I admired by drawing tributes to them on *TBG*'s cover. I did whatever I could to draw attention to my work — even going so far as to draw *four hundred* characters on the cover of *TBG*'s 400th issue and creating a 3-D cover for issue #447. Now comics fandom may or may not have liked me, but they *did* know who I was.

End results.

One of the features on *The Comics Page* was called "The Mike Mist Minute Mist-ery," a silly six-panel private-eye strip. Dean Mullaney, editor and co-publisher of Eclipse Comics, being an admirer of Max Collins' writing — and being aware of my work through *The Buyer's Guide* — was convinced to publish a collection of the "Mike Mist" stripe. The now-defunct *Mystery* magazine asked us to continue "Mike Mist" as a monthly feature in their pages. And when Dean wanted to fill a slot in his black-and-white anthology *Eclipse Magazine, he* called *us* — and "Ms. Tree" was born. (Even Ms. Tree's "costume," that black raincoat of hers, comes from *The Comics Page* and a paper-doll feature thereon.) Before long, Ms. Tree had abandoned her black-and-white roots, and was appearing in full color in her very own comic book.

Now, I'm not saying that, if you get a few drawings published in a fanzine or start a self-syndication project, it will automatically lead to your drawing a monthly Baxter-paper comic book — but it will get you closer to your goal than sitting back and doing nothing will.

I have now shared with you (in excruciating detail) the events which led to my being a professional cartoonist. I didn't trouble you with this because I felt it was time to set down my autobiography — I am only in my mid-twenties, and would still have to do a lot of

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living to justify setting down my life story — but rather to show all you aspiring cartoonists out there that breaking into the comic-book business, while certainly not easy, is not an impossible thing to do. If you've got the talent, and if you work hard enough at it, it can be done.

I haven't given you any "drawing lessons" here — there are much more talented artists out there for you to learn from — and I urge all you young scribblers to study the work of as many cartoonists, illustrators, and fine artists as you can. Many young artists will become too enamored of *one* artist and simply become a second-rate version of their hero. Why should a comic-book company hire an imitation when the original is available? Study, respect and learn from the artists who have come before, but, for your own sake, try to find your *own* style.

Something else you should keep in mind is that the comic-book business is just that — a *business*. No matter how talented you may be or how beautiful your drawings are, the publishing companies will not be interested in working with you if you cannot do your business with them in a professional manner. Schedules have to be met, and that means artists must meet deadlines. Scripts have to be followed, and that means you've got to respect other people's work and not make arbitrary and unauthorized changes.

A modest talent with a completely professional manner will get ahead faster in this business than an extremely talented artist who is incapable of fulfilling the publisher's needs.

You should do your best to show *your* professionalism from the start — when you send samples of your art to a comic-book company, make it a slick and attractive package. Find out who the art director of the company is and address your package to that person. Find out what the company wants to see: Don't send portrait shots of super-heroes, if to tell a story. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope so your samples can be returned and you can receive a reply.

These are all just little, commonsense things, but you'd be surprised how many people fail to do them when submitting samples. Remember, the major companies receive an incredible number of submissions from untried talent. You are competing with a *lot* of other folks. If you want to be the one out of the crowd to be hired, you've got to impress the publishers with your talent *and* professionalism.

And for goodness sake, if you want to work in the comics, *do* send samples around. You may not get hired right off the bat — few people are (I sure wasn't) — but you will at least have taken your first step.

I know several people who have been telling me for *years* that they want to write or draw comic books. Every time I bump into them, they'll tell me about some new character or idea they've come up with, some of them quite good. They'll ask me for advice. I'll tell them what I can and urge them to send samples out. I'll bump into them a few months later and ask if they sent out those samples, and the answer is always the same: They just haven't gotten around to it.

That's sad, because these guys might be able to get work in the industry, if they'd only give it a try. There is no good fairy who will come along and tap you with a magic wand to instantly give you a job in comic books. You've got to work for it. I had to work for it. Dave Stevens had to work for it. Len Wein had to work for it. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby had to pay their dues, too.

Have you gotten the point yet? Drawing or writing comic books is a *job* — and you are not going to have a chance of getting that job unless you at least apply for it.

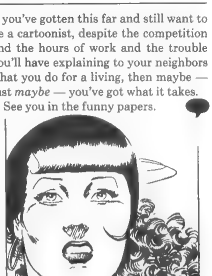
Some of you may not have given much thought to that aspect of creating comics — the fact that it *is* work. Drawing comics is not a lazy man's profession, as any artist who has spent 24 hours without sleep at the drawing board in order to make a deadline can tell you.

Some of the things I've pointed out might discourage you from trying to get into this crazy business — good. If you *can* be discouraged, then you *should* be discouraged. If you can't take rejection — if you can't live with the idea of your work being poorly printed sometimes — if you couldn't face your comic book being canceled or being given a scathing review in a fanzine — then, for your own good, do something else for a living. But

Drawing or writing comic books is a job — and you are not going to have a chance of getting that job unless you at least apply for it.

if you've gotten this far and still want to be a cartoonist, despite the competition and the hours of work and the trouble you'll have explaining to your neighbors what you do for a living, then maybe — just *maybe* — you've got what it takes.

See you in the funny papers.



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return of the fantastic four!

By Will Murray

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The Fantastic Four are back!

That may seem like an absurd statement to make about the stars of a comic book that turns 23 this year, but a lot of people, myself included, believe it's true.

The reason is John Byrne. When Byrne took over art and script chores for Marvel's flagship title in 1981, he brought a lot of *X-Men* readers with him, and, for the first time in about a decade, *The Fantastic Four* became a hot book.

I was one of those attracted to Byrne's interpretation of the famous quartet but, unlike many of the new readers, I wasn't a carryover from his *X-Men*. In fact, I'd never seen his work there. Just to give you an idea of where I'm coming from: As far as I was concerned, The X-Men had lost most of their appeal when Jack Kirby left the title around 1965. So John Byrne didn't introduce me to The Fantastic Four. He *reintroduced* me to The Fantastic Four, and he did it by putting the magic back into the strip.

Once, *The Fantastic Four* was a monthly excursion into sense of wonder. If you collected comics during the '60s, you couldn't help but notice it on the newstands. Compared to the staid DC titles of the day, it was a cocky little comic with the outrageous statement "World's Greatest Comic Magazine!" written above the quirky title lettering.

Everyone who ever read it remembers his first encounter with The F.F. Mine happened to be that classic issue numbered, appropriately enough, #4. It was January 1962, and I was about a month into what would be a long comics-collecting career when I discovered that issue at the drugstore.

For the cover of ***Fantastic Four*** *#264, John Byrne recreated the cover of* ***Fantastic Four*** *#1. You'll find Jack Kirby's original version later in this article.*

The cover showed as bizarre a collection of characters as could be imagined chasing each other into the surf. There was the pointy-eared Sub-Mariner, muscular in his red trunks, carrying a blonde in a blue bodysuit. There was a man in an identical suit, along with a brown, lumpy monster in blue trunks and boots accompanying him. There was a flaming, flying man accompanying the latter two, and those three were pursuing the Sub-Mariner. If you didn't read the word balloons, you wouldn't know whether the Sub-Mariner were rescuing — or kidnapping — the blonde. That confusion between heroes and villains turned out to be deliberate, not to mention one of the strengths of the comic.

Inside, complicated personal interactions drove what was otherwise a simple plot. The Human Torch had quit the team in the aftermath of the previous issue, and two remaining members (Mr. Fantastic and The Invisible Girl) blamed the fourth partner (The Thing), who disliked all of them except for The Invisible Girl, who loved Mr. Fantastic.

The team split up for the search, and The Thing ultimately found The Torch, at which point they fought until The Thing temporarily reverted to his normal self, Ben Grimm. Flying off, The Torch ended up in a Bowery flophouse, where he accidentally restored the memory of a bearded derelict, who turned out to be Prince Namor, the long-lost Sub-Mariner.

The latter returned to the sea, only to discover that U.S. atomic tests had wiped out his Atlantean home. Swearing vengeance on the human race, he returned to New York with a giant walking whale-monster. In the furious battle that ensued: The Thing strapped a nuclear bomb on his back and, Jonah-like, entered the whale in order to destroy it; The Sub-Mariner had a love-at-first-sight meeting with the Invisible Girl; and The Human Torch sent Prince Namor back to the sea in a flaming tornado. The Fantastic Four were reunited.

That was my introduction to the new quartet, and it contained not a hint of how they came to be, which only added to their appeal. It was years before those early issues were reprinted, and I learned the complete story of how The Fantastic Four had begun.

The origin had been told in *Fantastic Four* #1, dated November 1961. Dr. Reed Richards was determined to beat the Russians to Mars in his privately-built rocket. His fiancee (Susan Storm) and her teen-age brother (Johnny) constituted the crew. All they needed was to convince test pilot Ben Grimm to fly the ship.

But Grimm was reluctant. He was certain the rocket wasn't fully shielded against radiation. He told Richards, "You *know* we haven't done enough research into the effect of cosmic rays! They might kill us all out in space!"

Sue replied, "Ben, we've *got* to take that chance . . . unless we want the com-

John Byrne didn't introduce me to The Fantastic Four. He reintroduced me to the Fantastic Four, and he did it by putting the magic back into the strip.

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mies to beat us to it! I — I never thought that *you* would be a coward!"

That did it. Grimm flew the others — right into a cosmic ray storm. They crashed on Earth, and found they had been — changed.

Sue became invisible. Ben regenerated as an ugly brown monster. Reed discovered he had the absurd power to stretch his limbs like taffy. And Johnny burst into flame and could also fly.

Once their mutual recriminations were out of the way, Reed suggested they use their powers to help mankind. They took their fighting names, became The Fantastic Four, and spent the rest of the issue fighting a blind misanthrope named The Mole Man, who was more pitiable than criminal. (A ton of monsters were thrown in for the benefit of Marvel's regular audience.)

From this modest but unorthodox first issue, a new way of approaching comics would emerge. The architects of

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
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THE Fantastic Four
4 MAY
STOP HIM! IF THE SUB-MARINER REACHES THE WATER, HE'LL BECOME INVINCIBLE!
"THE COMING OF THE SUB-MARINER!"

The new regard the old. John Byrne's interpretations of The Sub-Mariner and The Invisible Girl confront Kirby and Lee's introduction of Prince Namor in ***The Fantastic Four****.*

THE Fantastic Four
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I--I CAN'T TURN INVISIBLE FAST ENOUGH!! HOW CAN WE STOP THIS CREATURE, TORCH?
JUST WAIT AND SEE, SISTER! THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE ONLY BEGUN TO FIGHT!
FEATURING: "THE THING!" "MR. FANTASTIC!" "HUMAN TORCH!" "INVISIBLE GIRL!" TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ONE MIGHTY MAGAZINE!
THE THREE OF YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE! IT'S TIME FOR THE THING TO TAKE A HAND!
IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN ROPES TO KEEP MISTER FANTASTIC OUT OF ACTION!
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The first issue of ***The Fantastic Four*** *was published when comics still cost a dime a copy. If you could find it today, this issue would probably cost more than $1000 in mint condition.*

this revolution were writer/editor Stanley Martin Lieber and Jacob Kurtzberg — known to the public as Stan Lee and Jack Kirby.

In *Origins of Marvel Comics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), Lee wrote about the creation of *The Fantastic Four* #1: "Let me take you back to 1961. It's been twenty-two years since I first started with Timely [which is what Marvel was called in the '40s], and I'm still editor, art director, and head writer there. At the moment, the trend is monster stories, so we're turning out a pandemonious plethora of BEMs and scaly-skinned scaries. Jack Kirby, he of Captain America fame when I first started at Timely, had long since left and then recently returned to the fold as our top artist. Jack and I were having a ball turning out monster stories with such imperishable titles as 'Xom, the Creature Who Swallowed the Earth,' 'Grottu, the Giant Ant-Eater,' 'Thomgorr, the Anti-Social Alien,' 'Fin Fang Foom' (I never could remember what his shtick was — if he was a he), and others of equally redeeming artistic and literary value."

Marvel hadn't published any superhero comics since the institution of the Comics Code in 1955, but it was about to re-enter the field with a vengeance.

When publisher Martin Goodman noticed the rival *Justice League of America* was doing well, he said to Lee, "If *The Justice League* is selling, why don't we put out a comic book that features a team of superheroes?"

"It was natural for me to choose Jack Kirby to draw the new superhero book that we would soon produce," Lee continued. "Jack had probably drawn more superhero strips than any other artist and he was as good as they come. We had worked together for years, on all types of strips and stories. Most importantly, we had a uniquely successful method of working. I had only to give Jack an outline of a story and he would draw the entire strip, breaking down the outline into exactly the right number of panels replete with action and drama. Then, it remained for me to take Jack's artwork and add the captions and dialogue, which would, hopefully, add the dimension of reality through sharply delineated characterization."

Lee and Kirby together developed the team that lasts to this day.

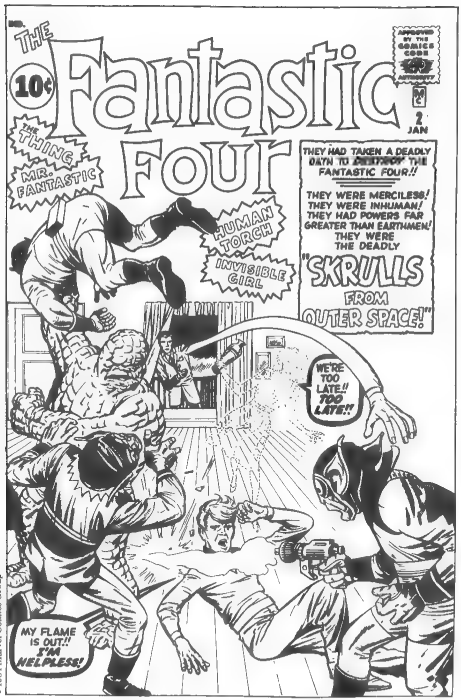
Actually, none of The Fantastic Four was a unique creation: Mr. Fantastic was a variation of the Quality Group's comedic Plastic Man. The Invisible Girl was a blond Invisible Scarlet O'Neil. The Human Torch was a new version of the '40s Marvel character of the same name. The Thing was their most original super-hero, but he was so reminiscent of their monster titles that, not long after *The Fantastic Four* began, he was given horns and an extra head and put through his paces in *Strange Tales* as the "Two-Headed Thing."

From this modest but unorthodox first issue, a new way of approaching comics would emerge.

But it was the treatment of The Thing and the others that made the difference.

It was Lee's idea to make The Thing the "heavy," to use his own word. He figured if the character was unpredictable and at odds with his partners, he would be the most interesting one to readers.

Originally, Sue Storm was conceived of as permanently invisible, wearing a


THE
10¢
Fantastic
Four
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE
JAN
THE THING
MR. FANTASTIC
HUMAN TORCH
INVISIBLE GIRL
THEY HAD TAKEN A DEADLY OATH TO DESTROY THE FANTASTIC FOUR!!
THEY WERE MERCILESS! THEY WERE INHUMAN! THEY HAD POWERS FAR GREATER THAN EARTHMEN! THEY WERE THE DEADLY
"SKRULLS FROM OUTER SPACE!"
WE'RE TOO LATE!! TOO LATE!!
MY FLAME IS OUT!! I'M HELPLESS!
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Who Inked the First 10 Issues?

Comics Collector *asked Marvel Comics Direct Sales Manager Carol Kalish to provide an accurate list of inkers on the first 10 issues of* ***The Fantastic Four****. Working with artist Rich Howell, she provided the following list, with the warning that the identifications on the first two issues are "strange and counter to what most people assume is the situation":*

#1 — Marvin Stein did partial inks
#2 — Team-inked, with primary work done by Bill Everett
#3-#4 — Sol Brodsky
#5 — Joe Sinnott
#6-#10 — Dick Ayers

"That's the best we can come up with, based on what anybody knows," Kalish said. "This is how tough it is to assign art credits. The information can't be found via existing records; it has to be based on analysis of the issues involved."

mask and clothes in order to pass as a normal woman. This would have meant she'd have had to fight in the nude as The Invisible Girl, so Kirby dropped that idea.

The details of the loosening of the restrictions surrounding the Human Torch make one of the untold stories of early Marvel. According to Lee's information printed in *Comics Interview* #5, "Comics Association told me he may never burn anyone with flame, he may only burn ropes, doors, etc. — never people. And, he cannot toss fireballs as the old Human Torch could."

Yet, within a year, The Torch was hurling fireballs with abandon.

Evidently, the Comics Code Authority relaxed its injunction.

One former *Fantastic Four* inker commented that there was at that time a major, but unpublicized, relaxing of Code interpretation by the Authority and, if it hadn't been for the new freedoms, there might never have been a Marvel Age of Comics.

Nevertheless, with the initial restrictions in mind, Kirby drew that historic first issue, and Lee wrote the finished, final script. It had been entirely a collaborative effort, and neither writer nor artist could claim to have created The Fantastic Four alone.

The first few issues were crude, even for Marvel at that time. For some reason, Kirby's pencils were inked by artists other than Dick Ayres, who was his regular inker on their monster titles. A number of people inked those early issues; fan speculation has tended to try to attribute the credit to one man, either one of Kirby's anonymous assistants or Al Hartley, better known for drawing *Patsy Walker*. In either case, the art was less polished than normal. The scripts were unexceptional, too.

But the characters were unusual for comics. The Fantastic Four had neither costumes nor secret identities, and they fought among themselves. More like idealistic misfits than superheroes, they were a breath of fresh air in an industry that had insisted its characters be perfect in every way.

With the third issue, Lee and Kirby made some concessions to tradition. The Fantastic Four established a headquarters in the towering Baxter Building in New York (not in some fictitious comic-book city) and they donned simple blue uniforms — although The Thing kept tearing his off. The title also got a new inker in Sol Brodsky, whose radiant brush improved the look of *The Fantastic Four* immensely, if only for

two issues.

Lee's earliest scripts were corny beyond belief. In the second issue The Fantastic Four thwarted an invasion of the shape-shifting Skrulls from space with clippings of Kirby monsters from Marvel's own *Strange Tales* and *Journey into Mystery*. The Skrulls were led to believe the comic-book monsters were Earth's defenders!

The third issue pitted them against the Miracle Man, a magician who seemed to possess unlimited powers. He brought a statue of a monster to life, and it practically destroyed New York until Reed Richards realized they'd been battling the illusions of a mass hypnotist!

With the return of The Sub-Mariner in issue #4, the stories improved dramatically.

The following issue, #5, saw the debut of the quartet's arch-villain, Dr. Doom — a tormented genius whose experiments in black magic had so destroyed his face that he had to wear an iron mask and medieval robes. Doom and The Sub-Mariner teamed up in the next issue, in which Lee revealed Sue Storm's crush on Prince Namor.

It took Lee and Kirby exactly a year to work out the characters and their relationships. When the Sue/Reed/Ben triangle became the Sue/Reed/Ben/Namor quadrangle, they decided that was too much. In issue #8, they introduced blind Alicia Masters, who just happened to look a lot like Sue Storm. Alicia became The Thing's girlfriend, taking him out of the running. At the same time, the monster's antagonism toward the others was softened.

That issue also marked the first time Reed tried to cure Grimm of being The Thing. The cure turned out to be temporary, but Grimm was grateful, his hatred for the others evaporated, and they reciprocated by calling him "Ben" instead of "Thing."

Kirby reinterpreted him visually, as well. Originally, he had looked like an ambulatory heap of brontosaurus droppings, and his appearance had changed from panel to panel. Later, it got better. His appearance only changed from issue to issue, stabilizing for a while as a beetle-browed ogre with dinosaur skin.

But The Thing's ultimate evolution may not have been so much Kirby's doing as it was the result of the inking of George Roussos, who inked the covers to issues #18 (featuring The Super-Skrull) and #20 (The Molecule Man), both of which showed a rocky-looking Thing. Inside, the character remained his old, lumpy self. It wasn't until Roussos took over inking the stories with issue #21 that the rocky Thing became standard.

Shortly after this, Sue Storm gained new powers, including the ability to generate invisible force fields. This was in response to reader complaints that she contributed little to the stories — a complaint that was frequently justified. Her chief function in early plots had been as the romantic object of a succession of male leads.

When Lee and Kirby produced *The Fantastic Four Annual* #1 in 1963, readers were treated to a double-length story in which Sue played a prominent role — yet never used her powers once!

Readers also complained about Reed Richards. They thought he was too egotistical, because he called himself Mr. Fantastic, and suggested "better" names, like "Mr. Elastic." They said he was too old for Sue Storm because of his white temples, which Lee hastened to point out were prematurely gray. But, when it was revealed that Reed and Ben had both served in World War II, apparently no readers complained about that.

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"THE GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE IN THE WORLD!!"
IN THIS GREAT, COLLECTORS'-ITEM ISSUE, YOU WILL SEE, FOR THE FIRST TIME!
THE AMAZING FANTASTI-CAR,
THE COLORFUL NEW FANTASTIC FOUR COSTUMES,
AND OTHER STARTLING SURPRISES!
ALSO, LEARN THE SECRET OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S SKYSCRAPER HIDE-OUT!!
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With the third issue, The Fantastic Four acquired costumes, not to mention "The Amazing Fantasti-Car."

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!
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THE Fantastic Four
5 JULY
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"MEET... DOCTOR DOOM!"
WITH A TURN OF THIS DIAL, I SHALL DESTROY THE FOUR OF YOU, FOREVER!!
I'VE GOT TO REACH HIM! HE'S DRAINING THE AIR OUT OF THE ROOM! I CAN'T BREATHE! MY--MY STRENGTH IS EBBING!
AIR!! I GOTTA HAVE AIR!
MY FLAME IS DYING WITHOUT OXYGEN! I'M HELPLESS!
I MUST GET IN TO SAVE THEM! BUT HOW? HOW??
© 1984 Marvel Comics Group

The fifth issue introduced Doctor Doom, and the Stan Lee-Jack Kirby title was well on its way to success.

Readers also swallowed some bizarre applications of his powers invented by Kirby, such as the instance in which Reed replaced a blown tire on a speeding car with his own wheel-shaped body!

But The Human Torch was turned into the most colorful of the group.

First rendered as a blazing human bonfire, The Human Torch's design was quickly modified to resemble the controlled flame of The Human Torch of the '40s. However, the new version put the older fireball-tosser to shame with concepts like nova flame and tricks like creating flaming lariats that somehow caught things without scorching them.

Lee gave him his own strip in *Strange Tales* for a while. In one story in that series, The Torch created a catapult of fire that shot a dangerous bomb into space. He stopped doing this sort of thing when restrictions on his behavior were loosened enough to permit him to toss fireballs.

It was the team of four that was responsible for The Marvel Age of Comics. If you were reading comics then, as I was, you *knew* it was true. There was an excitement at Marvel. There was experimentation and a willingness to try anything. This was especially true with *The Fantastic Four*, which featured issue-long stories, when most of the other companies ran three cramped stories per issue.

It was the team of four that was responsible for The Marvel Age of Comics.

Later, Marvel tried continued stories. When these proved successful, too, Marvel incorporated continued subplots, sometimes throwing in a few pages foreshadowing next month's multi-part story at the end of the current sequence.

By this time, Marvel was publishing companion books like *The Incredible Hulk* and *The Amazing Spider-Man*, and the characters and storylines often cut from one title to another and back again. Lee started calling Marvel the "House of Ideas," and sales soared.

Lee and Kirby kept reader interest high in more obvious ways, too. When a character or villain proved popular, they kept bringing that character back. Dr. Doom and Sub-Mariner were two cases in point. You could count on seeing them both at least twice a year, but these were not mere return engagements. The characters were further developed in each reappearance.

Would The Sub-Mariner ever win Sue Storm's heart?

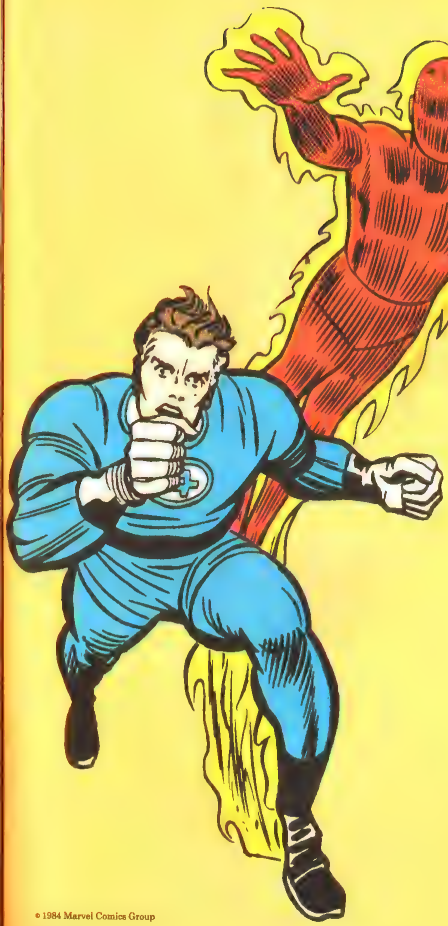
Was Dr. Doom hideously scarred behind that mask, as Lee hinted, or did it conceal a tiny scratch, which Doom's mad mind had exaggerated beyond all reason, as Kirby believed?

But even dramatic villains did not always return unless there was a good reason. I waited for years to see my favorite villain, The Molecule Man, reappear — but in vain.

Even though The Fantastic Four were supposed to be crime fighters, their original goal, exploring space, was not forgotten. In issue #13, they finally reached the moon, six years before Neil Armstrong, but simultaneously with a Marvel-created evil Russian megalomaniac. Two years later, they were warping space to The Skrulls' home planet, situated in one of Lee's most famous mistakes, the *fifth* quadrant of the Andromeda Galaxy.

Then, it was into sub-space and the Negative Zone, after the stars became passe.

Although the writer/artist team remained stable, *The Fantastic Four*'s "look" changed frequently, as the inkers were rotated, until a permanent inker settled in with issue #44. It was Joe Sin-



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nott, returning after a three-year absence.

As it happened, that issue also inaugurated the beginning of the peak years of the series. Sinnott's inking had nothing to do with that — but it didn't hurt, either. When the bestial Gorgon suddenly showed up in #44, hot on the trail of Medusa, the evil mystery-woman of the living red hair, it began a chain of issues ultimately leading to the revelation of an entire race of super-heroes hidden in the Andes. (Or was it the Himalayas? Lee never got it straight twice running.) The race was called The Inhumans, and The Inhumans turned out to be good guys.

The "Inhumans" sequence spilled over into the coming of The Silver Surfer. Kirby's visualization of the character seemed modeled after Hollywood's Oscar — but The Silver Surfer rode through space on a metallic surfboard. He was the herald to Galactus, a high-tech demi-god who was above good or evil — but nevertheless was out to suck all life from our insignificant planet. Suddenly, the scale of the stories approached cosmic proportions, and the series would never be the same.

Kirby and Lee discussed the plot of the upcoming three-part story which would introduce Galactus. In *Son of Origins of Marvel Comics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), Lee described what happened next: "Jack spent the next few weeks drawing the first 20-page installment. When he brought it to me so that I could add the dialogue and captions, I was surprised to find a brand-new character floating around the artwork — a silver-skinned, smooth-domed, sky-riding surfer atop a speedy flying surfboard. When I asked ol' Jackson who he was, Jack replied

something to the effect that a supremely powerful gent like Galactus, a godlike giant who roamed the galaxies, would surely require the services of a herald who could serve him as an advance guard.

"I liked the idea. More than that, I was wild about the new character. It didn't take long for us to christen him with the only logical appellation for a silver-skinned surfboarder — namely, the Silver Surfer.

"Studying the illustrations, seeing the way Jack had drawn him, I found a certain nobility in his demeanor, an almost spiritual quality in his aspect and his bearing. In determining what his speech pattern would be, I began to imagine the way that a space-born apostle would speak."

Until that point in 1965, the series had settled into a merry-go-round of the same villains: principally The Puppet Master, The Mad Thinker, Diablo (a virtual clone of a villain named Diablq who had fought Kirby's 1959 Shield in *The Double Life of Private Strong*), and two Fantastic Four counterparts, The Red Ghost and his Super-Apes and The Frightful Four.

Although sales were high, and The Academy of Comic Arts and Sciences turned the boastful cover blurb "World's Greatest Comic Magazine!" into a self-fullfilling prophecy, when it voted *The Fantastic Four* the best comic book of 1963, both men were dissatisfied. As it became clear that Lee would probably spend the rest of his career doing comics, he made the best of it by writing them on a more mature level. Kirby brought his own viewpoints to the plotting of the series, scribbling suggested captions and dialogue in the margins of his art.

Kirby pencilled at the rate of eight pages a day, a schedule so phenomenal that other artists spoke of having "broken the Kirby barrier," when they could produce enough art per day to make a comfortable living.

Amid this torrent of creativity, Kirby was often careless. He drew from memory, so returning characters seldom looked the same. He especially had problems with The Skrulls (though, admittedly, they were shape-changers). Were they short and ugly, as in #2, or tall and regal, as in #3? Skrull equipment also changed shape. Kirby drew their spaceship two different ways in one issue, and a Skrull raygun managed to change in appearance a few pages apart in another.

But these infelicities usually went unnoticed by readers caught up in Kirby's headlong storytelling.

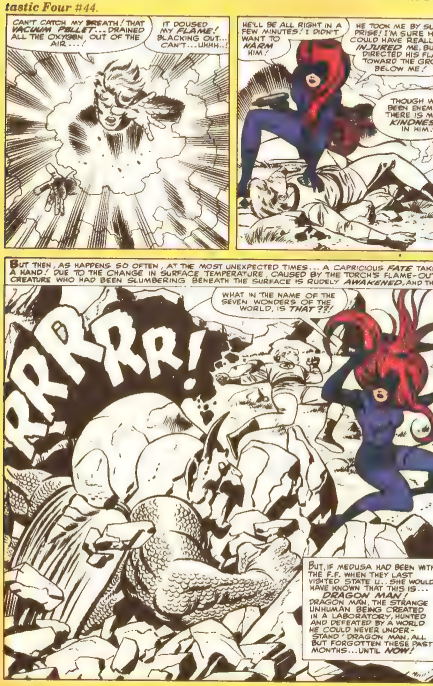
Nor was Kirby alone in making an occasional error. Some additional strange moments in comics can be traced to Stan Lee. Because he was his own editor, many mistakes slipped past Lee's blue pencil. He forgot characters' names, misremembered past plots and, like Kirby, often dropped the ball between pages. In issue #28, The Fantastic Four fought The X-Men. The Beast destroyed one of The Puppet Master's puppets, but a Lee caption four pages later credited The Thing. It was a typical Lee boner.

But Lee had a flair for dialogue and characterization, and his scripts added a crucial human dimension no Kirby-scripted comic before or since has possessed. Once the two refined the nature of their collaboration, they were the perfect comics team.

For about three years, 1966-1968, Lee and Kirby's creative balancing act was perfect. This was the period of Galactus, Him (later called Adam Warlock), and the alien Kree. As Kirby's ideas assumed increasing grandeur, Lee scripted accordingly, sometines stumbling over the adjectives in an effort to explain some new Kirby concept in the space of a single panel.

The credits were modified to say,

The Inhuman Medusa begins to warm towards The Human Torch in ***The Fantastic Four*** *#44.*


CAN'T CATCH MY BREATH! THAT VACUUM PELLET... DRAINED ALL THE OXYGEN OUT OF THE AIR...
IT DOUSED MY FLAME! BLACKING OUT... CAN'T... UHHH...!
HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT IN A FEW MINUTES! I DON'T WANT TO HARM HIM.
HE TOOK ME BY SURPRISE! I'M SURE HE COULD HAVE REALLY INJURED ME, BUT HE DIRECTED HIS FLAME TOWARD THE GROUND BELOW ME!
THOUGH WE'VE BEEN ENEMIES, THERE IS MUCH KINDNESS IN HIM!
BUT THEN, AS HAPPENS SO OFTEN AT THE MOST UNEXPECTED TIMES... A CAPRICIOUS FATE TAKES A HAND! DUE TO THE CHANGE IN SURFACE TEMPERATURE CAUSED BY THE TORCH'S FLAME-OUT, A CREATURE WHO HAD BEEN SLUMBERING BENEATH THE SURFACE IS RUDELY AWAKENED, AND THEN...
WHAT IN THE NAME OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD IS THAT??
RRRRR!
BUT IF MEDUSA HAD BEEN WITH THE F.F. WHEN THEY LAST VISITED ATLANTIS, SHE WOULD HAVE KNOWN WHAT THIS IS — A DRAGON MAN! A DRAGON MAN, THE STRANGE UNHUMAN BEINGS CREATED BY THE ANCIENT SCIENTISTS AND DEFENDERS OF ATLANTIS! HE COULD NEVER UNDERSTAND! CRASHED HERE... BUT FORGOTTEN THESE PAST MONTHS... UNTIL NOW!

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By issue #82, Inhuman Crystal replaced Sue Richards as one of the team — and they interacted with other Inhumans, too. On this cover, Medusa, Black Bolt, Gorgon, and Karnak race with The Thing, The Human Torch, and Mr. Fantastic.

ambiguously, "produced by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby." When they decided to create the first black super-hero in comic books, Kirby submitted a sketch of a character he dubbed "The Coal Tiger." Lee renamed him The Black Panther and asked for costume changes.

The credits were modified to say, ambiguously, 'produced by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby.'

At one point in 1966, Lee inaugurated a subplot about Johnny Storm's going to college and for months built up to the story of a has-been football coach (Jim Thorne), his egotistical star player, (Whitey Mullins), and Johnny's friend (Wyatt Wingfoot). Abruptly, those characters vanished, their situation unresolved. Why they were discarded — and what story they had been created to tell — remain a matter of conjecture to this day.

By 1969, the strip had returned to its pre-1966 cycle of recurring villains. Worse, old plots were recycled. Galactus returned. A sequence about The Thing's turning evil (originally titled "The Brutal Betrayal of Ben Grimm") was redone (as "By Ben Betrayed").

And other changes were in the wind. In *Fantastic Four Annual* #3, Sue and Reed finally married. Two annuals later, Sue bore a child: Franklin. This further minimized her involvment with the team, so she was temporarily replaced with one of The Inhumans (Crystal) in issue #81. Crystal was an elemental, whose powers seemed to consist of whatever Kirby felt like drawing at a given time. For a year, Sue barely appeared, but, with the introduction of the witch Agatha Harkness as a babysitter, Sue returned to the fold.

The art in this period became increasingly simple — almost to the point of crudity. The previously well-proportioned characters turned muscle-bound, and Kirby seemed to be attempting to tell his stories in the easiest manner possible, leading to a rash of rampaging generic androids, four-panel pages, and reader complaints. That the fewer panels gave Lee less to write was incidental.

There was a brief return to excitement in 1969, with a four-part Dr. Doom sequence Kirby used to retell the popular British TV series, *The Prisoner*, followed by almost notalgic returns for The Mole Man and The Skrulls. But after that, story quality plummeted. Even the 100th issue was poor. It was a ridiculous free-for-all involving android duplicates of many past Fantastic Four villains controlled by The Mad Thinker and The Puppet Master.

Kirby left *The Fantastic Four* two issues later, leaving Lee and John Romita to finish off a sequence involving The Sub-Mariner and Magneto. Kirby went to DC Comics, where he was allowed to script his own work. Five issues later, a final Kirby Fantastic Four story straggled into print. It was one Lee had accepted months before but hadn't yet printed. It was taken from inventory, and portions were redrawn by other artists.

For those of us who, like me, virtually grew up on Marvel Comics, Kirby's leaving was a shock. It was hard to imagine *The Fantastic Four* without him, but I kept reading, as Romita's work swiftly gave way to the more dynamic approach of John Buscema.

Lee continued to recycle plots. Galactus came back for a third time, heralded by the forgettable Gabriel. The Hulk battled The Thing, also for the third time.

Finally, Stan Lee left the title, too, turning the scripting job over to protege Roy Thomas in 1972. Thomas quickly replaced Sue Richards with Medusa, and then Gerry Conway took over the series. I don't remember those issues at all, but Lee's absence effectively removed the last of the things that made me love *The Fantastic Four*, and I stopped reading it — and all comics — with the November 1973 issue.

It was just in time, too, because the

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE
Fantastic Four
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MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE
HONEST! DOCTOR DOOM IS NOT IN THIS MARVEL COMIC!
BUT YOU WILL FIND OUT THE STARTLING SECRET OF FRANKIE RAYE, PLUS A DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE LIFE OF THE THING!
EVERYONE'S FAVORITE GALACTUS!
NEED WE SAY MORE?
© 1984 Marvel Comics Gr

series was about to enter its darkest phase. The group broke up an issue later. Later, Reed and Sue nearly divorced after Reed was forced to turn their mutant son into a mental vegetable. Scripter Conway backpedaled and soon restored the status quo. The strip became a revolving door for writer/artist teams for much of the '70s. Only Joe Sinnott's familiar inks maintained a shred of continuity.

With each changing of the guard, new directions were tried. Sue returned to the group. The Thing lost his powers and was replaced by Luke Cage. The Thing got his powers back. The Fantastic Four split up, and each issue focused on solo stories. Reed lost *his* powers and got them back. The group reunited. Every new writer took a crack at a

Reed and Sue nearly divorced after Reed was forced to turn their mutant son into a mental vegetable. Scripter Conway backpedaled and soon restored the status quo. The strip became a revolving door for writer/artist teams for much of the '70s.

Galactus story. The book floundered for years.

In 1975, Jack Kirby returned to Marvel but — except for some covers and an amusing *What If?* issue in which the Marvel Bullpen became The Fantastic Four — he declined to draw the strip. But he and Lee *did* collaborate on the 1978 *Fantastic Four* cartoon show, in which the Torch was replaced by a robot named Herbie.

Lee and Kirby seemed content to retell their early stories, and the show was actually inferior to the 1966 version, which had lacked their direct involvement. I remember looking in on the cartoon and feeling both nostalgic and disappointed at the same time. I felt no urge to pick up the comic, which by then included Herbie, too. My comic-reading days were over.

Or so I thought until I chanced to see a copy of *Fantastic Four* #236, dated November 1981. The words "20th Anniversary" replaced the customary "World's Greatest Comic Magazine!"

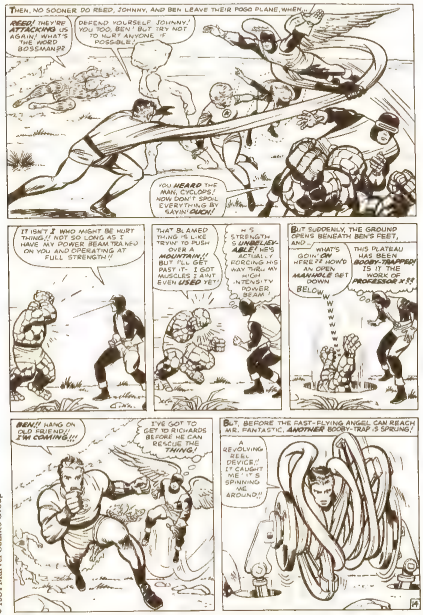
Has it really been twenty years? I thought. A wave of nostalgia overcame me. I bought it, neither noticing nor caring that it was by John Byrne.

The story entranced me from the start. Reed, Sue, Johnny, and Ben — as skinny as they had been in 1962 — were living in the town of Liddleville, which appeared to be frozen in the early '60s. Reed and Sue were married, and Reed was a college professor. Johnny was a happy-go-lucky teenager. Ben ran a tavern. All of them acted as if there were no such group as The Fantastic Four — but all of them were plagued by disturbing dreams of their flight into the cosmic-ray storm and of the powers they had seemingly never had. When they compared dreams, Reed naturally deduced the amazing truth, and Dr. Doom made his most incredible appearance ever.

"Terror in a Tiny Town" was a brilliant story, only slightly marred by muddy reproduction. And to someone who hadn't read the book in exactly eight years, it was the perfect reintroduction.

But more, it captured the ambiance of the earliest days of the series, right down to the haunting Stan-Lee-style ending.

I bought every Byrne back issue I could find, skipping those he hadn't scripted as well as drawn, because it was his writing that attracted me most. From them, I learned that Byrne had deliberately turned back the clock and that, like myself, he'd grown up on the


THEN, NO SOONER DO REED, JOHNNY, AND BEN LEAVE THEIR POGO PLANE, WHEN...
REED! THEY'RE ATTACKING US AGAIN! WHAT'S THE MATTER, BOSSMAN?
DEFEND YOURSELF, JOHNNY! YOU, TOO, BEN! BUT TRY NOT TO HURT ANYONE IF POSSIBLE!
YOU HEARD THE MAN, CYCLOPS! NOW DON'T SPOIL EVERYTHING BY SAYIN' "OUCH!"
IT ISN'T I WHO MIGHT BE HURT THINGS'LL NOT GO LONG AS I HAVE MY POWER BEAM TRAINED ON YOU AND OPERATING AT FULL STRENGTH!
THAT BLAMED THING IS LIKE TRYIN' TO PUSH OVER A MOUNTAIN!! BUT I'LL GET PAST IT- I GOT MUSCLES I AIN'T EVEN USED YET!
HIS STRENGTH IS UNBELIEVABLE! HE'S ACTUALLY FORCING HIS WAY THRU MY HIGH INTENSITY POWER BEAM!
BUT SUDDENLY THE GROUND OPENS BENEATH BEN'S FEET, AND...
WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?? HOW'D AN OPEN MANHOLE GET DOWN BELOW?
THIS PLATEAU HAS BEEN BOOBY-TRAPPED! IS IT THE WORK OF PROFESSOR X??
WWWWW
BEN!! HANG ON OLD FRIEND!! I'M COMING!!!
I'VE GOT TO GET TO RICHARDS BEFORE HE CAN REACH THE THING!
BUT, BEFORE THE FAST-FLYING ANGEL CAN REACH MR. FANTASTIC, ANOTHER BOOBY-TRAP IS SPRUNG!
A REVOLVING REEL DEVICE! IT CAUGHT HE 'N' IS SPINNING 'EM AROUND!!
JB

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When Jack Kirby returned to Marvel in 1975, he no longer drew ***The Fantastic Four****. This issue (#28) had appeared more than a decade earlier, when Lee and Kirby had had the team fight The X-Men.*

The *Real* Fantastic "4"

TOO MUCH OF THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, JOHNNY, BUT ONE THING IS CLEAR...
THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE A JOB TO DO.
© 1984 Marvel Comics Group

By Will Murray

One of the most innovative Kirby touches in the early issues of ***The Fantastic Four*** *was so subtle that most readers never even noticed it.*

The group's original uniforms sported a clever 3-D effect. Kirby drew the "4" symbol on their chests so that the shadow effect actually ***changed*** *with the varying perspective, as if it were a hologram.*

According to Bob Cosgrove's 1974 article "The Fantastic Years" (in ***Evil Eye*** *#1), Kirby ". . . at first carefully drew [it] in every panel, only to give up the effort when he found the inker omitting it nine times out of ten." The hologram effect petered out around issue #20.*

Apparently, the fans never missed it.

The flat version of the F.F. symbol continued until issue #232, when John Byrne took over the title and reestablished the 3-D effect after 18 years. However, whether by accident or design, Byrne drew it so the shadow-effect did not shift with changing perspective. Finally, when the group received its new uniforms, the old-style symbol was dropped permanently.

Once again, readers never missed it.

characters.

According to published interviews, it had been Byrne's intention to pick up the series' threads from the point at which Kirby had left. While he had done that, he had also returned the "look" of the title to the Sinnott-inked *Fantastic Four* #5 — the first issue he had read, as it turned out.

The return to the old-style black and blue uniforms and the original "bath-tub-shape" Fantasticar were the most obvious signs of Byrne's intentions.

Byrne took over *The Fantastic Four* with a number of sweeping changes planned. He wanted to get rid of Franklin Richards, dump Alicia Masters, and relocate The Inhumans to the moon. The powers that were vetoed the first two suggestions, and a planned story bringing back the humorous Impossible Man never got off the ground. Still, in just the first year, Byrne managed to clear out a lot of the character underbrush: killing off Ego, the Living Planet; wiping out the Skrulls' home planet; redefining the much-abused Galactus; and returning The Thing to his former tragic glory. Not content with that, Byrne irrevocably destroyed Dr. Doom's scarred body (although his mind lives on) and actually changed the Fantastic Four uniform.

This last might strike some as the greatest sacrilege, but it was ingeniously done.

When they emerged from the Negative Zone, their suits changed color, and the black-and-white result was so striking that even a purist like myself could only applaud.

As I write this, Sue Richards is once again pregnant, Alicia is drifting away, The Thing has temporarily left the group to be replaced by She-Hulk, and a new Dr. Doom is waiting in the wings.

I confess I was dismayed by the She-Hulk development, but so far Byrne has handled it well. I remain fascinated with the new Fantastic Four, who are really the old Fantastic Four — but, then again, are not.

The letters pages are full of praise from other old-time Marvelites who feel the same way.

But why?

Byrne doesn't really write like Stan Lee.

He doesn't draw like Jack Kirby.

He doesn't even have Kirby's cosmic sense.

Perhaps this last observation is the key. To my mind, the best years of *The Fantastic Four* were the early, free-wheeling Kirby-inked-by-Ayres days, the Inhumans/Galactus period notwithstanding. Then the scale was more human, and it wasn't so much a superhero series as an *adventure* series involving heroes whose flaws overshadowed their powers.

It captured the ambiance of the earliest days of the series, right down to the haunting Stan-Lee-style ending.

AND THEN··
FLAME ON!?
POOR BEN. HIS LIFE HAS BEEN TOUCHED BY SO MUCH TRAGEDY HE CAN'T ACCEPT SOMETHING GOOD WHEN IT FINALLY HAPPENS. HE'S WORRIED BEFORE THAT HE MIGHT LOSE ALICIA IF HE REVERTED TO NORMAL. HOW SAD...
AND YET, SOMETHING IN HER FACE JUST THEN...
IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO READ HER EYES. IS THAT CONCERN FOR BEN'S SAFETY, OR IS IT SOMETHING ELSE? SOME SENSE OF...LOSS?

She-Hulk is the most recent member of the group which makes up The Fantastic Four. The Thing has left them for the time being — leaving behind Alicia, who may also change.

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YEOW! WHAT THE HECK IS THAT NUTTY MAGICIAN DOIN' TO HIM? I AIN'T NEVER HEARD NOTHIN' LIKE THAT!
NO TIME FOR QUESTIONS! BEN GALACTUS HAS DROPPED HIS GUARD
WE HAVE ONLY ONE CHANCE
I HEAR YA TALKIN', BIG BRAIN! HOLD ON TIGHT AN' WE'LL FINISH THIS QUICK AND NEAT
HURRY, THING! I CAN ONLY TAKE SO MUCH OF THIS PRESSURE

In many ways, the original group was nothing more than Kirby's *Challengers of the Unknown* tailored for the super-hero market. (The two groups even wore similar uniforms.) Of course, you could go back even further — to the pulp hero Doc Savage, that classic adventure series about globe-trotting adventurers led by a scientific genius and operating out of a high-tech skyscraper headquarters, with humor provided by a hulking, wisecracking sidekick, for the archetypal inspiration.

It was the combination of fresh characterization and high adventure which made *The Fantastic Four* so popular in the early '60s. The strip lost something when Kirby went wild with the super-heroics later on, and it completely degenerated into standard super-hero fare after he and Lee left.

John Byrne seems to have recognized this. He pared down the musculature, relocated Sue and Reed to suburbia, and sent the quartet off on a four-part exploration of the Negative Zone.

The characters regained their lost humanity. The sense of adventure, of expectancy — of *wonder* — returned to the series. It's an old chord, but Byrne knows how to pluck it, and comics readers both old and new are responding.

I'm happy to be one of them. It's nice to look back on those great days when *The Fantastic Four* was really and truly "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine," but it's more wonderful to see those days return. Yes, The Fantastic Four are back! I just hope they're here to stay.

By Kim Metzger

Let's pretend for a minute that you're on a quiz show. Your category is "Superman," and you have to identify the following people: Clark Kent, Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen, Perry White, and Linda Danvers. You have 10 seconds.

Time's up!

Chances are you had no trouble identifying the first two names. Nearly everyone in America knows who Clark Kent and Lois Lane are. Most people also know who Jimmy Olsen and Perry White are, though they may have difficulty explaining what they do.

But that last name is a stumper to most people. Linda Danvers is one facet of the Superman legend not recognized by the average person, although she's been a part of that legend for more than 25 years. She holds a very special place in the heart of The Man of Steel — not the place of a lover, as you might think at first, but the place of a relative.

Because Linda Danvers is actually Superman's first cousin from the planet Krypton: Kara Zor-El, better known to the world at large as Supergirl.

It isn't hard to understand why the general public is unfamiliar with The Girl of Steel. Most people's knowledge of Superman comes from the movies with Christopher Reeve, George Reeves, and Kirk Alyn; the old television series with George Reeves; and maybe even the radio series with Bud Collyer. But their knowledge of Superman *doesn't* come from the comic book.

Supergirl never appeared in movies or on TV or radio. (She hadn't even been created at the time of the first runs of the radio and TV series.) Even in the comics she was never really a part of Superman's regular supporting cast. But the unfamiliarity to the public should soon change, thanks to a movie due to be released this year by the Salkind brothers, producers of the *Superman* films.

A newcomer narped Helen Slater will appear in the title role of Supergirl.

As far as the comic-book-reading public is concerned, though, Supergirl's saga began in the May 1959 issue (#252) of *Action Comics*. In that comic's cover story, Superman spotted a rocketship entering Earth's atomsphere. Arriving too late to prevent a crash, Superman noted, "It reminds me of the rocket that brought me to earth."

He prepared to pull out the body of the pilot. But, to his surprise, a pretty blonde stepped out of the rocket, completely unharmed by the crash and dressed in a costume patterned after his own.

The teenager explained that she, too, was from Krypton, a story Superman immediately labeled impossible. After all, he had been an infant when shot into space just before the planet exploded decades earlier. How could her story be true, when she couldn't have been born until after Krypton's end?

Then it was that comic-book readers learned the origin of Supergirl.

"When Krypton blew up," the teenager told Superman, "*you* were not the only one to escape alive. By sheer luck, a large chunk of the planet was hurled away intact." This chunk had contained Argo City, a city under a dome that created a germ-free atmosphere and shielded the citizens from the hazards of space, allowing them to survive.

But there was another danger. The ground, like the rest of Krypton's remains, had turned into green kryptonite. The radiation had threatened to kill the survivors — but their leading scientist, Zor-El, had had sheets of lead laid over the soil to cut off the radiation.

(Later, when it was established kryptonite was harmless to non-powered Kryptonians, the writers would explain that the ground beneath Argo City had turned to *anti*-kryptonite, a rare form deadly only to such people.)

"Life settled down for the Krypton refugees," said Supergirl. "Some years later, Zor-El took a wife, and a daughter was born to them . . . *me*!" (The wife's name was Alura or Allura, depending on the story.) But when the daughter, named Kara, "had grown into girlhood," a meteor shower had smashed through the lead shielding, letting the radiation through once more.

Knowing they were doomed, Zor-El had used the time they had left (a month by his reckoning) to build a spaceship that would send young Kara, at least, to another world and safety.

But which world?

As Zor-El worked on the rocket, Alura used a "super-space telescope" and "space radio" to search for a planet.

Linda Danvers is one facet of the Superman legend not recognized by the average person, although she's been a part of that legend for more than 25 years.

After examining several worlds, Alura spotted a flying man on one. After mastering this planet's strange language, she learned the flying man was named Superman. What's more, he, too, was from Krypton! Knowing Kara would also have super-powers on this world, Alura decided to send her to Earth to meet this other Kryptonian. Alura made a costume fashioned after Superman's, "so he'll know you're a Krypton girl."

No sooner was it finished than Zor-El rushed Kara into the rocket and shot her into space as the kryptonite radiation filled the air.

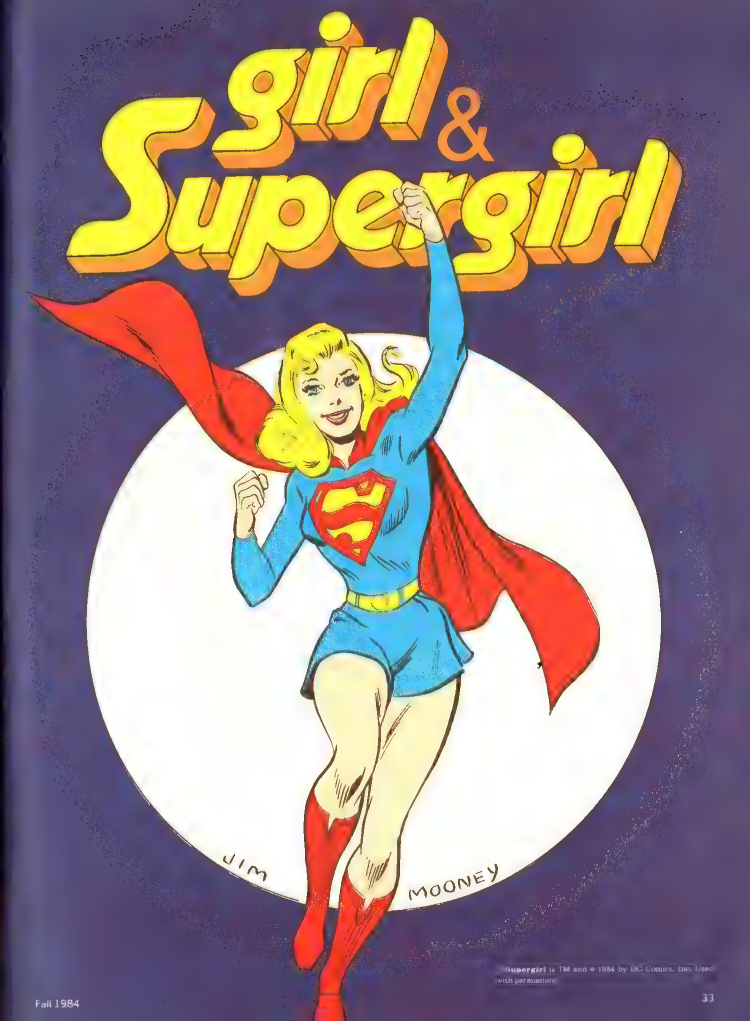
(This was the version of Supergirl's origin as it would eventually be given. In the original telling, it was "a street of homes," not an entire city, that had been saved. In fact, the name Argo City was used nowhere in the first story.)

Kara finished her story in tears, and Superman sympathized with her, telling how he had been shot into space by his father, Jor-El. An excited Kara then told Superman that her father was Jor-El's brother.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Superman. "Then you're my--*cousin!*"

Supergirl asked her newfound relative if she would be living with him, but Superman rejected the idea, feeling it would endanger his secret identity.

"But I have a great idea for your future life," he said. "You . . . can gain fame as Super-Girl, the Girl of Steel!"



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GREAT GUNS! A GIRL, FLYING! IT--UH-- MUST BE AN ILLUSION!
LOOK AGAIN, SUPERMAN! IT'S ME-- SUPERGIRL! AND I HAVE ALL YOUR POWERS!
PLUS! SUPERMAN MEETS METALLO!

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It was in ***Action Comics*** *#252 (May 1959) that Supergirl joined the cast of characters of the Superman mythos. So little has been made of her in the past quarter-century that many assume she was invented for the forthcoming film.*

There was just one hitch to Superman's plan. He didn't want Kara to begin her career right away. ("You'll need long practice before you can use your super-powers properly!") He took her to nearby Midvale Orphanage and disguised her in Earth clothes and a wig. ("That wig of pigtails makes you look like a different girl entirely who was born on Earth!")

While he was fetching the disguise, Supergirl came up with a name for herself: Linda Lee. (Superman instantly reflected on the coincidence of her having chosen a name with the initials so many important people in his life seemed to have.) After registering her as a "poor girl" whose whole community had been wiped out in a big disaster, Superman left Linda at the orphanage.

Supergirl's beginnings as a literary creation are not quite as clear.

Her first story was written by Otto Binder, who (with C.C. Beck) had created the original Captain Marvel in the early '40s. It is, therefore, tempting to classify Supergirl as Superman's version of Mary Marvel. However, some sources say Mort Weisinger, editor of all the Superman comic books published at the time (and there were several; besides *Superman* and *Action Comics*, The Man of Steel also made regular appearances in *Jimmy Olsen*, *Lois Lane*, and *World's Finest* comics) came up with the original idea and passed it on to Binder, who then wrote the story.

Whoever her creator was, Supergirl's presence required some careful planning. It may seem a bit *too* coincidental that this new survivor from Krypton was Superman's cousin. Yet, had there been no relation, readers would've instantly demanded the logical step: that Superman and Supergirl marry to perpetuate the Kryptonian race.

Supergirl's origin also necessitated a change in the explanation of Superman's powers.

By making her a close relative, a super-female could be introduced without disturbing the vital (to DC's editors) Superman-Lois Lane relationship. (Kryptonians, of course, knew far too much about genetics to permit marriage between close relatives.)

Supergirl's origin also necessitated a change in the explanation of Superman's powers. Prior to her creation, the rationale for Superman's abilities had always been the difference in size (and, therefore, the gravity) between Earth and Krypton. Since Supergirl had grown up on a chunk of Krypton which would have had lower gravity than Earth, a new explanation for the powers had to be found.

From that moment on, the yellow sun of our solar system (with solar rays far more potent than the those of the red star Krypton orbited) was responsible for the powers of any Kryptonian who happened by. (It also opened the door for a new weakness. Any time a writer needed Superman to be an ordinary human being, they merely had to find a way to expose him to red-sun radiation.)

The artist on the first story was Al Plastino, one of several artists who drew Superman's adventures at that time.

Her first story was written by Otto Binder, who (with C.C. Beck) had created the original Captain Marvel in the early '40s.

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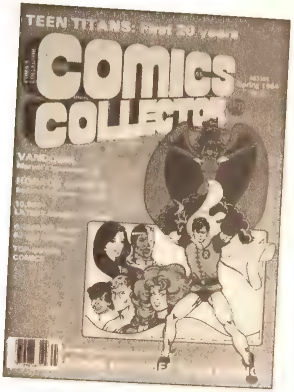

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ACR

With the next issue of *Action*, #253, when Supergirl got her own series as a back-up to her cousin, she got an artist who would draw her adventures for the next nine years: Jim Mooney.

For many of Supergirl's fans, he is *the* artist on the feature.

Mooney had been working in the comics industry since he had begun working for Fox in 1941. Over the years, he worked for Fiction House and Timely, among others. He was working at DC on one of *Action*'s other back-up features, "Tommy Tomorrow," when Editor Mort Weisinger gave him the Supergirl assignment.

When Mooney started on the strip, he had problems when he drew Superman.

"He [Weisinger] didn't care much for my early Superman, the way I drew it. It wasn't the stereotype, the *house* Superman, so he asked me to pick one of the artists I thought was best and try to follow that pretty closely. I picked Curt Swan."

Though Mooney may have modeled his Superman after Swan, everything else was definitely Mooney's. He had a very recognizable inking style, soft and expressive, that lent itself perfectly to Supergirl, who was often shown in moods of joy, sorrow, and reflection. At the end of the stories, there would often be scenes of Linda lying on her bed, thinking about her experiences and what she had learned from them. In these scenes, her face showed emotion in a way that was rare for comic book characters of the time.

Supergirl's early years on Earth were hard ones for her. Since Superman insisted she keep her existence a secret, she had to be careful when she went into action. She couldn't handle the big things, such as bank robberies, fires, and earthquakes, in the way her cousin could. She would have been seen — and Superman had forbidden that.

Instead, Supergirl frequently devoted her time to helping others, particularly the children at the orphanage. She would secretly save them from danger, aid them in their schoolwork, or, most frequently, help them to be adopted. To her sorrow, however, adoption was something she herself had to avoid. Foster parents might discover her origin, something Superman wanted her to avoid at all costs.

Looking at these early stories, the reader finds Superman often coming across as selfish and cruel, forcing his cousin into secrecy for so long a time. (In the process, of course, he was also

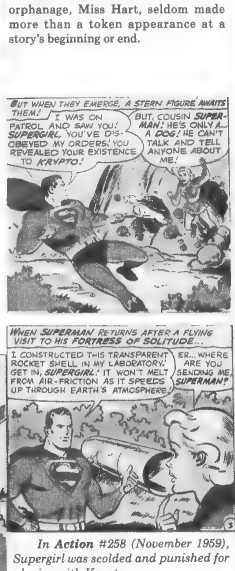
Supergirl artist Jim Mooney sits in front of a tile painting he created.

denying her parental love and guidance.) His training for her sometimes bordered on the sadistic.

In one story, he sent her to live on an asteroid, telling her she had to go into exile because she had revealed her existence to Krypto, his pet super-dog, without permission. After two traumatic weeks, Supergirl was told via a note she could return to earth to avoid a cloud of kryptonite dust headed for the asteroid. Resuming her Linda Lee identity, she was besieged by reporters who demanded to know where she'd been during that time. (A missing girl does not go unnoticed.) She covered herself to the satisfaction of all but one newspaperman, who remained after the others had left. He then demanded to know why she had no mosquito bites, when she claimed to have spent the two weeks lost in a swamp.

Linda revealed she was Supergirl, since she'd figured out that the reporter (Clark Kent) was Superman. He then told her the exile had been a test to see how well Linda would conceal her identity. His intended reward for passing the test had been to reveal his Clark Kent persona to her. Her ability to discover it herself left Superman feeling a little foolish (and, one hopes, a little guilty).

Another characteristic of these early stories was the relative lack of regular supporting characters. As has already been mentioned, Supergirl constantly helped the other orphans to find foster parents. Therefore, few of these characters were in the stories for more than one issue. The headmistress of the orphanage, Miss Hart, seldom made more than a token appearance at a story's beginning or end.


BUT WHEN THEY EMERGE, A STERN FIGURE AWAITS THEM!
I WAS ON PATROL AND SAW YOU! SUPERGIRL, YOU'VE DISOBEYED MY ORDERS! YOU REVEALED YOUR EXISTENCE TO KRYPTO!
BUT, COUSIN SUPERMAN! HE'S ONLY A DOG! HE CAN'T TALK AND TELL ANYONE ABOUT ME!
WHEN SUPERMAN RETURNS AFTER A FLYING VISIT TO HIS FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE...
I CONSTRUCTED THIS TRANSPARENT ROCKET SHELL IN MY LABORATORY. I GET IN, SUPERGIRL! IT WON'T MELT FROM AIR-FRICTION AS IT SPEEDS UP THROUGH EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!
ER... WHERE ARE YOU SENDING ME, SUPERMAN?
NO, BUT LIKE ANY FRISKY DOG, HE COULD FOLLOW YOU TO THE ORPHANAGE AND ACCIDENTALLY EXPOSE YOUR IDENTITY! YOU MUST BE TAUGHT A LESSON FOR BREAKING MY RULE! WAIT HERE, SUPERGIRL!
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In Action #258 (November 1959), Supergirl was scolded and punished for playing with Krypto.

It was not until *Action* #261 that a semi-regular character finally made the scene — and he wasn't human. His name was Streaky, and he was a cat. Some of the time, in fact, he was a super-cat!

Streaky's existence made sense in DC's world of super-beings — because Supergirl who frequently treated as Superman's opposite number. Superman once fell in love with a mermaid; Supergirl was smitten by a merboy. Superman had a fortress in the arctic. Supergirl had one, briefly, in the desert. Superman had a super-dog. Therefore, Supergirl should have a super-cat.

Unlike Krypto (or Supergirl, for that matter), Streaky was *not* another refugee from Krypton. He was an Earth cat Linda had saved from a dog and then adopted. While playing in the woods near the orphanage later, he came upon a small nugget of kryptonite Linda had treated with chemicals in an attempt to find an antidote for the radiations. Her experiments had accidentally created "x-kryptonite," an isotope with odors that gave Streaky powers identical to those of Kryptonians. These powers eventually wore off, but in later stories the x-kryptonite became tangled in a ball of yarn Streaky played with, a plot twist that ensured Streaky's participation in future stories.

Mooney had a little more artistic leeway with Streaky than he did with other characters in *Supergirl*. At that time, most comic book artists had much less creative input in storylines than they have today — especially those artists who worked for Editor Weisinger.

"Mort was very possessive in his editorial duties," said Mooney. "He didn't really care much for many suggestions. About the only thing I had a hand in was the super-cat.

"I got one thing across there and I'm surprised. Streaky was made to look like an animated cat. He had the eyes of an animated cat. I just threw that in for the hell of it." (Mooney says he had once wanted to get into animation, which may explain his decision to give Streaky a more cartoon-like look.)

Supergirl spent about three years as Superman's "secret emergency weapon." (It may have been so that Weisinger could have time to gauge the character's popularity among readers. Had she not clicked, he might have decided to let her perish heroically saving her cousin, the world, or both.)

Finally, though, it was decided to reveal her existence to the world. But at

NEXT, LESLA-LAR HAD AIMED A STRANGE, KRYPTONITE-TINGED RAY ON SUPERGIRL, SO THAT...
OH, NO! I CAN'T FLY, SUPERMAN! SOMEHOW, I'VE LOST ALL MY SUPER-POWERS!
YOU'RE BREAKING MY HEART, YOU POOR THING! HA, HA! IF SUPERGIRL ONLY KNEW THAT THE RAY I INVENTED HAS ROBBED HER OF ALL HER POWERS!
BUT THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING... I'VE EVEN MORE UNPLEASANT SURPRISES UP MY SLEEVE FOR SUPERGIRL! BUT THEY'LL COME LATER, HA, HA, HA...
AND NOW, OUR STORY RETURNS TO THE PRESENT, AS LINDA BRUSHES AWAY HER TEARS, AND...
I MUST FORGET YESTERDAY'S DREAMS... TOMORROW'S HOPES -- AND LIVE FOR -- I CHOKE! TODAY!
MINUTES LATER, REVIEWING A GROUP OF THE MIDDLE ORPHANAGE CHILDREN, A CHILDLESS COUPLE, MR. AND MRS. FRED DANVERS, TAKE A LIKING TO LINDA...
AS WIFE AND I HAD LONG CONSIDERED ADOPTION, THIS YOUNG GIRL, LINDA LEE, MAY GIVE HER A WONDERFUL HOME.
ONCE I'D HAVE PROPOSED ADOPTION BY USING A CLEVER SUPER-TEAR!
3

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(Above:) Deprived of her super-powers by Lesla-Lar, Supergirl no longer avoided adoption. Fred and Edna Danvers picked her at once. (Below:) When her new parents said they'd take her to a beautician to have her hair cut, Supergirl adopted a new wig.

that point something went wrong. Supergirl had lost her powers!

It turned out that Lesla-Lar, an evil scientist who looked a lot like Supergirl, had stolen Supergirl's powers. (Lesla lived in Kandor, *another* Kryptonian city that had escaped the planet's destruction, albeit in a fashion a little more drastic than Argo City's: It had been reduced in size by space villain Brainiac and placed in a bottle, which Superman rescued and kept as a trophy in his fortress until he found a way to enlarge it years later.)

Lesla was jealous of the "acclaim" Supergirl would have had and plotted to stop her career before it could begin. Broken-hearted, Supergirl resigned herself to living the life of an ordinary Earth girl.

NEXT MORNING... LIKE IT? I DECIDED TO SURPRISE YOU AND DO MY HAIR MYSELF!
I MADE TO A BEAUTICIAN WOULD HAVE DISCOVERED I WEAR A WIG OVER MY BLONDE HAIR!
IT'S DARLING!
GREAT, LINDA!

This kicked off a serialized story that lasted for eight issues, a rare event for comics of the time. In the course of the story, Linda gained a lasting set of foster parents, Fred and Edna Danvers. (After all, with her powers and function as Superman's secret emergency weapon both gone, there was no longer any reason for her to avoid adoption.) She abandoned her pigtails in favor of a more mature (and, many readers felt, better-looking) hairdo. She twice switched places with Lesla-Lar (Lesla's doing, of course), visited the past and future, had her powers restored by the magic of Mr. Mxyzptlk, and suffered six effects of red kryptonite, an isotope that always had different temporary effects on kryptonians. (The last effect turned her into a mermaid, allowing her to resume her romance with her merboy paramour.)

The story concluded with the public announcement of Supergirl's existence.

Once she began to operate openly, she slowly began to acquire a cast of supporting characters. There were her foster parents, of course. She got a boyfriend: Dick Malverne, whom she'd known at the orphanage as Dick Wilson.

ACTION COMICS
12¢
FEB. NO. 285
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
AT LAST — BY POPULAR DEMAND! SUPERMAN Presents SUPERGIRL TO THE WORLD!
SUPERMAN — I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. THEY'RE CHEERING ME!
YOU DESERVE IT, SUPERGIRL! AFTER ALL, YOU ARE THE WORLD'S GREATEST HEROINE!
HOORAY FOR SUPERGIRL!
SHE'S EVERY BIT AS HONORABLE AS SUPERMAN!
WHAT IS HER IDEA?
SHE'S BEEN AMONG US EARTHLINGS FOR YEARS, AND WE NEVER SUSPECTED IMAGINE THAT!!
PRESENTLY, AT THE WHITE HOUSE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
SUPERGIRL, I KNOW YOU'LL USE YOUR SUPER-POWERS NOT ONLY TO FIGHT CRIME, BUT TO PRESERVE PEACE IN OUR TROUBLED WORLD.
THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT... I WILL!
WHENEVER ONE OF US JOURNEYS INTO THE FUTURE OR THE PAST... OFF INTO OUTER SPACE... OR INTO ANOTHER DIMENSIONAL WORLD... THE OTHER WILL CONTINUE TO PATROL EARTH!
MOMENTS LATER, INSIDE THE U.N. BUILDING, SUPERGIRL RECEIVES A STANDING OVATION FROM DISTINGUISHED REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER NATIONS...
PHYSICALLY, SHE'S THE MIGHTIEST FEMALE OF ALL TIMES! AT HEART, SHE'S AS GENTLE AND SWEET AND AS QUICK TO TEARS AS ANY ORDINARY GIRL! I GUESS THAT'S WHY EVERYONE WHO MEETS HER LOVES HER!
CRY

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(Left and below:) It was almost three years after her introduction that Supergirl's existence was revealed to Superman's world (in ***Action*** *#285, February 1962). (Above right:) She gained a pet super-horse in* ***Action*** *#292 (September 1962).*

SUPER-HORSE, I DON'T KNOW YOUR NAME, OR WHERE YOU CAME FROM, BUT YOU CAME ALONG JUST IN TIME TO SAVE ME FROM THE KRYPTONITE RAYS OF THOSE ENEMY ALIENS!
IMAGINE IT! A MAGNIFICENT STALLION APPEARING OUT OF NOWHERE TO FLASH ACROSS THE SKY AT SUPER-SPEED! A GALLANT CHARGER WHOSE IRON HOOFS CAN LEVEL MOUNTAINS, WHOSE SILKEN HIDE IS INVULNERABLE TO THE DEADLIEST OF WEAPONS! IMPOSSIBLE, YOU SAY! NO SUCH SUPER-HORSE EXISTS... YET, THESE ARE THE POWERS OF THE FANTASTIC STEED RATED TO BE SUPERGIRL'S COMPANION AS SHE BATTLES AGAINST THE FORCES OF CRIME AND EVIL! WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THIS AMAZING HORSE? HOW DID HE GAIN HIS INCREDIBLE SUPER-POWERS? WHAT MYSTERIOUS MISSION BRINGS HIM TO SUPERGIRL'S SIDE? EVEN SUPER-GIRL HERSELF IS BAFFLED BY THE EERIE MYSTERY OF...
the SUPER-STEED of STEEL!

At the orphanage, Dick had once spotted her flying as Supergirl. Superman built a robot double of his cousin to throw Dick off the track, but his suspicions persisted when he started dating Linda. In other words, he was Supergirl's version of Lois Lane.

Another regular was Lena Thorul. Lena was Linda's best friend. However, in one of the little ironies Mort Weisinger loved to put in his stories, she was also the kid sister of Lex Luthor, Superman's worst enemy. This fact wasn't known to Lena, and Luthor went to great lengths to keep it that way. In fact, he often sought Supergirl's aid to keep Lena from learning the truth.

But keeping secrets from Lena was hard to do. When she was a child, she had touched a "space brain" Luthor had been examining. The resulting shock destroyed the space brain but gave Lena the ability to read minds. Shortly after that, the lab accident had occurred which turned Luthor both bald and evil. His family had moved away in disgrace and changed their name to Thorul, an anagram of Luthor. The parents had been killed in an automobile accident, and Lena had grown up an orphan. Her telepathic powers frequently came in handy for Supergirl, though she had to be careful to avoid letting Lena learn the truth about her brother — and about Supergirl's identity.

Supergirl's strangest friend, though, had to be Comet. At first glance, Comet was simply another super-pet — this time, a horse!

But there was much more to him than that.

Originally, he had been Biron, a centaur who lived in Ancient Greece. He had fallen in love with the sorceress Circe, who was portrayed as far more congenial than the character Homer had mentioned in *The Odyssey*. Biron had saved Circe's life when a rival magician, Maldor, tried to poison her. Circe planned to give him human form (his fondest wish) as a reward.

Maldor, still nearby, switched the potions, and Biron turned into a horse instead. Unable to reverse the potion's effects, Circe tried to make it up to Biron by giving him such "powers of the gods" as flight, strength, speed, and immortality. Furthermore, to enable him to communicate with others, he was given telepathy (which could be manifested as "telepathic vision" that acted the same as x-ray vision).

Maldor was furious at this turn of events and cast a spell upon Biron which exiled him to a dead planet orbiting a star in, naturally, the constellation Sagittarius. Biron stayed there for centuries, until the exhaust from a rocket destroyed the magical force field that held him prisoner. The rocket, of course, was the one bringing Supergirl to earth. He followed it, determined to be near the girl who had "rescued" him.

(Comet's first appearance, in *Adventure* #293 [Feb. 1962], was as a member

LATER, AS SUPERGIRL RETURNS TO MIDVALE...
HI, MOM AND DAD!
WELCOME HOME, SUPERGIRL!
TO OTHERS, SHE'S THE WORLD'S GREATEST HEROINE, BUT SHE'S MORE THAN THAT TO US! SHE'S THE DAUGHTER WE DEARLY LOVE!
AFTER SUPERGIRL SWITCHES TO HER OTHER IDENTITY...
I'M SO HAPPY! I'M NO LONGER JUST SUPERMAN'S EMERGENCY WEAPON! NOW I'M HIS PARTNER! GOLLY, THINGS'LL BE VERY DIFFERENT FROM NOW ON!
END
THEY SURE WILL! SEE NEXT ISSUE FOR ANOTHER GREAT SUPERGIRL ADVENTURE!
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MY HEAD... MY BODY... THEY'RE CHANGING BACK TO SUPER-HORSE! THAT MEANS THE COMET HAS LEFT THIS AREA OF SPACE! MY ADVENTURE IS OVER AND I'VE REGAINED MY SUPER-POWERS! I CAN FLY BACK TO EARTH AGAIN!
LATER, ON EARTH, AS SUPERGIRL TELLS HER STORY TO HER FRIEND, SUPER-HORSE...
AND SO THAT SPACE MAN SAVED ME FROM THE KRYPTONITE! ACCORDING TO THE CYBERNIAN PREDICTOR, HIS NAME SHOULD CONTAIN THE LETTERS "LL"!
THERE ARE NO "LL"S IN MY NAME, BUT ACTUALLY THE PREDICTOR WAS CORRECT! I'VE JUST REALIZED THAT IT WAS THE FAMOUS HALLEY'S COMET WHICH CHANGED ME INTO A HUMAN AND ENABLED ME TO SAVE HER!

*(Left.) Biron turned into Comet when a comet's influence was gone (**Action** #312, May 1964). (Below:) Eventually it was revealed that Supergirl's parents had not died with Argo City.*

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of the Legion of Super-Pets and gave no hint of this origin.)

Comet (named for a comet-shaped birthmark on his back) was a great help to Supergirl. Since his powers were based on magic, he was immune to the things that felled Supergirl. He could kick kryptonite boulders away or give her rides to planets circling red suns. Superman himself dubbed him "the mightiest super-creature of them all."

His relationship to Supergirl took a bizarre turn when they visited a planet of sorcerers. As a reward for saving the life of the head magician, a spell was cast on Comet that turned him into a man every time a comet passed by. (He didn't retain his powers in human form.) From then on there would seldom be a Super-Horse story in which he *didn't* run into a comet. In human form, he adopted the identity of a rodeo rider, Bronco Bill Starr, an identity he kept secret from Supergirl. It was probably just as well, since he frequently wooed Supergirl in this guise. Learning the truth might've put a definite damper on their relationship.

As the years went by, Supergirl experienced a *lot* more change than did her cousin and his friends. Whereas Superman was mostly concerned with keeping his Clark Kent identity secret and staying unmarried to Lois Lane, Supergirl was growing up. (One suspects Weisinger wanted to experiment with this character before she became as firmly rooted in her mythology as Superman had been.)

The first big change was as much a shock to Supergirl as it was the readers. Zor-El and Alura, her real parents, turned out to be alive!

It seems Zor-El had tried to save more people than Kara when those meteors smashed into Argo City. He had discovered another dimension similar to The

THEY'VE SET UP A DISASTER HEADQUARTERS IN ARGO CITY! AS CHIEF SCIENTIST MY FATHER IS IN CHARGE AND MY MOTHER IS HELPING HIM!
SECTOR II REPORTING! RADIAT ON IS FLOODING THE AREA! ONLY TWO SURVIVORS HULA: THEIR TRANSMITTER HAS GONE SILENT!
SECTOR 1
AS THE DEADLY RAYS TAKE THEIR EFFECT THROUGHOUT ARGO CITY... MORE METEORS BREAKING THROUGH THE SHIELDING! THE RADIATION IS AFFECTING EVERYONE! THIS IS MY LAST REPORT! GOOD LUCK!
AND SO THE DYING CITY MEETS ITS DOOM
I'VE CAN'T SAVE UP WE MUST HELP THEM! PRAY AT THE PEOPLE IT AND CHILDREN FIRST!
NO USE, ALURA... ALL OUR RADIATION-SPECIFIC THINGS IN OUR PROTECTIVE SUITS WON'T BE GOING NEXT!
GOOD BYE, ALURA,
SOB! I CAN'T BEAR THIS
YOU, TOO, DARLING! WHAT'S HAPPENED? CAN'T BE THE RADIATION OR-

Phantom Zone (used to imprison Kryptonian criminals), which he named The Survival Zone. He had created a ray to project people into this dimension, but it had failed when he tested it on himself and Alura.

Or so it seemed.

After Kara had been launched into space, her parents had watched grimly as kryptonite radiation had slowly killed the citizens of Argo City. Zor-El and Alura had started to feel its effects themselves, when they had begun to disappear.

Instead of killing them, the radiation had triggered a delayed effect that had sent them into The Survival Zone. They had drifted there for years until they finally found a way to contact Supergirl, who freed them.

Once freed, however, her parents provided Supergirl with a new dilemma. She loved her real parents but didn't want to desert her foster parents, either. The problem was solved when Zor-El and Alura decided they wanted to be with their fellow Kryptonians and went to live in Kandor.

More changes were soon to come. Lena Thorul got married to an FBI agent (who, unknown to her, had once arrested her brother) and seemingly vanished from the series.

Then Linda did something few comic book teenagers had ever managed to do: She graduated from high school and entered college!

Linda attended Stanhope University (on a scholarship, of course), where she quickly set up a base of operations for her alter-ego in an old chimney on the campus. She used it as a point of departure and return for various missions.

Unfortunately, when the editors decided to put her in a college setting, they neglected to supply a supporting cast for her. Dick Malverne, the Danvers, Super-Horse, and the others appeared from time to time, but Linda mostly palled around with different friends from one issue to the next.

In fact, the college background was frequently neglected for whole stories, as Supergirl became involved in adventures that took her far from Stanhope and often far from Earth.

About this time, Supergirl's adventures became mired in a swamp of mediocrity. The usual formula for her stories was that a strange menace or mystery would appear and Supergirl would fight it. Often, the supposed menace would be an alien, which she would follow to its home planet, only to find it wasn't actually evil — just misunderstood.

Other popular plots involved: the students of Stanhope's turning against Supergirl; Supergirl's helping students; Supergirl's punishing cruel students; and Supergirl's finding herself acting strangely for some reason. In short, many of her adventures became almost indistinguishable from those of her cousin.

The series' tone also changed artistically, when Jim Mooney (who'd wanted to leave the series for some time) finally did so and was replaced by Kurt Schaffenberger.

Schaffenberger is best known to comic-book fans as one of the artists on the original *Captain Marvel* series in the '40s and '50s (particularly on *The Marvel Family*) and as *the* artist on Lois Lane when she had her own comic. His Supergirl was very different from Mooney's and a little more cartoony, but the readers didn't seem to mind.

In fact, Supergirl's popularity continued to grow with the readers. By her tenth anniversary, they were no longer content to see her sharing *Action Comics* with Superman. Instead, she left that title and took over as the main feature in *Adventure Comics*. There, she regularly had two adventures each issue, one drawn by Schaffenberger and the other by Winslow Mortimer, who'd previously had experience drawing female characters for several of DC's romance titles. His style, too, was different, with a tendency to draw an attractive, if somewhat zoftig, Supergirl.

The stories were becoming more and more routine, however. Weisinger was nearing the end of his tenure as the editor of the Superman comics. It could be he was tiring of the characters after spending so much time on them for so many years. In 1970, he retired, and new editors were brought in for all of the Superman comics.

Supergirl's new editor (and writer and artist) was Mike Sekowsky. Sekowsky may have received the assignment because of the fan reaction he'd received with *Wonder Woman*, which he also edited at this time.

(Sekowsky's approach to Wonder Woman had been to remove her powers, along with her sister Amazons, and deal with the adventures of simple Diana Prince, whom he made look much like Emma Peel of TV's *The Avengers*.)

When he took over Supergirl, he also removed her powers ... almost. A bizarre villainess named Star-Fire (who wore a diamond-studded eyepatch) financed the development of a pill to rob Supergirl of her powers. It turned out, however, that the pill only worked part of the time, so her powers came and went unpredictably. Supergirl acquired an exo-skeleton to supplement some of her abilities, but it didn't make her invulnerable, so she was constantly in danger of being shot, stabbed, or beaten.

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Major changes in Supergirl's stories occurred when Mike Sekowsky began to edit them. Super-animals did not appear, and Supergirl's powers came and went. These issues appeared in 1971.

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Though Sekowsky's tenure on *Supergirl* was brief (only a year), he made several changes in the feature. The superanimals were gone, some of them never to be heard from again. A new supporting character was introduced: Nasthalia, a.k.a. Nasty. The niece of Lex Luthor, she wanted more than anything else to learn Supergirl's secret identity. (Since Lena's only child was a young boy, DC explained in a letter column that Luthor had had an older sister who had been disowned by their parents when she married against their wishes.)

Linda graduated from Stanhope and followed in her cousin's flight path by pursuing a news career. She became a camerawoman for K-SFTV in San Francisco. Her co-workers included

SUPERGIRL starring in...
Adventure COMICS
15¢
SEPT.
NO. 397
THE READERS HAVE SENT IN SO MANY GREAT IDEAS FOR A NEW COSTUME THAT I JUST DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE TO PICK.
CAN YOU GUESS WHICH NEW COSTUME SUPERGIRL WILL CHOOSE? IF NOT...
...FOLLOW HER AND HER TWO MYSTERY GUESTS IN HER BATTLE AGAINS
THE TROPOO THAT STALK
JUST I STASHED ONE OF MY NEW SUPER-OUTFITS IN MY BAG!
IT SEEMS THERE'S NO DAY OFF FOR SUPERGIRL!
COSTUME DESIGNED BY: MARGRET BERO NEW YORK, N.Y.

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Fashion was a focus, with readers being asked to suggest costume designs. The design finally chosen is the one shown upper left.

Geoffrey Anderson, Johnny Drew, and Nasty (who followed her, determined to expose her as Supergirl).

It was also decided when Sekowsky became editor that Supergirl needed a new look. She was given several new outfits over the months, most of them in "mod" styles that were outdated even before they appeared. It took several months (and came after Sekowsky's departure) before Supergirl found the blouse and hot-pants combination that stayed with her for the next decade.

She was given several new outfits over the months, most of them in 'mod' styles that were outdated even before they appeared.

When Sekowsky left, Joe Orlando took over as editor, and Supergirl entered a time that many fans feel was her best ever. Writers such as John Albano, Steve Skeates, Marv Wolfman, and Len Wein (the last two doing some of their earliest comics scripting) helped create a Supergirl who was much more human in her emotions than she'd ever been before.

Her new artist was Bob Oksner, who drew Supergirl in a fashion that reflected her new nature. Her relations with the people around her were handled with humor, excitement, and far more tenderness than we'd ever seen in the feature before. At last, we knew for certain that the Girl of Steel had a heart of gold. (Before he was done, Orlando even managed to restore Supergirl's powers to full-time status.)

This period was also short-lived, unfortunately. After three and a half years in *Adventure Comics*, Supergirl was given her own title. The first issue of *Supergirl* appeared in the late summer of 1972, to the joy of her many readers. The joy quickly turned to disappointment, however. Supergirl had almost instantly gone from her best era to her worst.

When the new title began, DC gave the editorship to Dorothy Woolfolk, who suddenly and unexpectedly left the company. The editing chores were then given to Robert Kanigher, whose previous credits included editing *Wonder Woman*, *The Metal Men*, and several of DC's romance titles. He often treated *Supergirl* as if he were still doing romance stories.

The stories that appeared during Kanigher's tenure were *awful* in the eyes of fans looking for a character of maturity, excitement, and fun. The character and her adventures were trivialized, and she was presented as a witless Barbie doll.

One cover showed Supergirl crying because her duties had kept her from getting a date for a dance. ("What's the good of being a *supergirl* helping everyone if I can't even get a *date*!") The story itself concludes with a character saying, "Wonder how a *super-heroine* spends her holiday!" The last panel's caption says, "The answer would shudder your heart, Mary Ann — for you'd see the *only girl* on campus without a *date* . . ." and the picture shows a tearful Supergirl with the thought balloon, "Sniff — I'm a real *winner* when it comes to solving other people's problems — but why am I always such a

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Supergirl finally got her own title, but the stories in which she appeared were widely regarded as unworthy of the character. (Above: #3, February 1973; Below: #10, October 1983.)

loser at solving my *own*! Some supergirl! I lost my date!"

Nor was this story unique.

Another had her competing with Zatanna (a magician who had a back-up strip in *Supergirl*'s comic) for the attention of a man. Another had her deciding all men were simply no good and leaving to live with the Amazons of Paradise Island. The series had barely made it to 10 issues before it was cancelled. The last issue teamed Supergirl with one of the stupidest characters ever to appear in comics, Prez, the teenage President of the United States.

With her magazine's demise, Supergirl began to go through a period that can at best be called erratic. She was tossed (with Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane — who had also just lost their own comic books) into a new title, *Superman Family*. The three characters rotated in the lead spot each issue. Supergirl had a total of two new adventures a year, edited by Julius Schwartz and often written by *Superman* scripter Cary Bates; the rest of the time her appearances were confined to reprints. Furthermore, it was at this time that her creative teams seemed to show uncertainty about exactly what they wanted to do with her.

Even before her *Adventure* series had ended, she had quit her job at the TV station. In her own comic book, she had been a student again, this time at Van-Dyre University where she studied acting. Now, in *Superman Family*, she was at New Athens School in Florida, where she was a student advisor. Her stories once again fell into the rut she had experienced near the end of her stint in *Action Comics*, as she began to face one run-of-the-mill alien menace or supervillain after another.

This indecision about who Supergirl is and what she should do has probably hurt the character most of all in recent years. *Superman Family* eventually changed format to allow all-new stories for all of its characters each month, but little was done to develop them. Supergirl simply stayed in the counselor's job, not doing much, until another writer decided out of the blue that she should become a star on a soap opera. That lasted until *Superman Family* was discontinued, and Supergirl was given another shot at her own comic, *The Daring New Adventures of Supergirl*. Unbelieveably, the writer put her back in college, this time at the University of Chicago.

(What makes this turn of events outrageous is DC's claim in a recent letter column that Supergirl is *19* years old! She would almost certainly not have graduated from high school before she was 16. That means her careers as Stanhope college student, cameraperson, VanDyre college student, New Athens student counselor, soap-opera star, and Chicago college student all had to have occurred within two years! One can only imagine her eventual job resume.)

Her careers as Stanhope college student, cameraperson, VanDyre college student, New Athens student counselor, soap-opera star, and Chicago college student all had to have occurred within two years!

Supergirl has also received another costume, perhaps at the suggestion of the movie's producers. When it was first introduced, many comics fans commented that it made her look like a cheerleader. Possibly to alter that impression, she added a headband; now she looks like a tennis player. (As it turns out, her costume in the movie is not like either version.)

By May 1984, it was announced that *Supergirl* is being cancelled again. She will shortly share a comic book with the younger incarnation of her cousin: Superboy.

Her fans hope she'll be permitted to stay where she is for a while. Maybe she'll be made appealing again — with her character, rather than her surroundings, as the focus.

If she were to return to what made her interesting in the early stories — or the ones under Orlando's editorship — she might recapture the qualities that endeared her to readers. And, of course, it remains to be seen how the character will be handled in the film — and how *that* will affect the character as she appears on newsstands.

A comic-book character doesn't endure for 25 years without attracting fans in the first place.

And now that the cat, the horse, and even the Kandorians are gone, there should be room for more than one super-being in comics.

All that has to be done is realize what made her so super to begin with.

The announced release date for the film ***Supergirl*** *was originally Summer 1984. DC Comics announced the release date of the official comic-book adaptation of the film would coincide with that. When the movie's release date was delayed until the Christmas season in 1984, DC's release date was delayed, too. You'll find it on sale late this year.*

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You pay only for your comics at a BIG 20% discount, postage, and a small service charge per shipment. Scared? Don't be! The maximum service charge is 75¢ per shipment and we have recently refined the system to allow for a graduated service charge for small shipments. After all, it's not fair to have one comic costing a fortune! This allows smaller collectors to get the best service possible while keeping costs to a minimum!

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1) WANT A PRICE GUIDE? OK . . . we'll give you one. That's RIGHT! We said GIVE. OK . . . what's the catch? The only thing is that you have to be a member of the comic service for the year's period in which the guide comes out. THERE ARE NO OTHER MINIMUM ORDERS TO QUALIFY FOR A GUIDE! And what happens if you quit before the year is up? Well . . . we've divided the cost of the guide into 12 equal parts. If you leave the service your account will be charged for the cost remaining of the guide. It is that simple! The next guide comes out in the spring, so don't be left out!

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3) Once a month you'll get the newest issue of the STYX MAGAZINE. That's something that we just started which replaces the old newsletter. It's got previews, cover repros information on the service and the world of comics, and (hopefully) contributions from service members. . . all neatly fitted into a few pages. Good reading, and it's free!

4) EACH MONTH we send out as many promotional flyers, information sheets etc., as we can possibly get into your package. So every second package you'll be getting more than just your comics! You'll get the latest updates and info right from the publishers!

5) MARVEL AGE and the NEW DC COMING ATTRACTIONS are supplied free each month to members with current accounts. That's right . . . no cost! That's just a little extra that we give you!

What can you expect in terms of service and customer relations?:

The comic service is designed for people who are far from a local source of books. It is also useful to those who do not have the facilities to go to comic shops for books from place to place. It is welcomed as well by those fans who, although they have a local outlet, are disgruntled with the chores involved and the costs of buying off the rack.

We can solve your collecting problems. We cannot compete, however, in terms of speed with the local comic shops in that we have a backlog of draining by long-distance and applies to any service. However, with our schedule, we feel that time will not be a major consideration.

We strive to give you satisfaction. However, we are human too and sometimes a mistake might accidentally pop up. In those cases (which are rare) we will promptly correct the problem to maximize your enjoyment of the comic service. We will always send exactly what your order entails. Incidentally, EVERY THREE MONTHS you will receive a computerized listing of your current standing order, so that you may make changes or adjustments if necessary.

Of course completeness is important. We strive NEVER to miss an issue. If such a case does arise, we will get the issue for you, no matter how long it takes, or we will credit your account the appropriate sum if you so desire. If you're happy with the service, then our job is accomplished.

We will always lend a friendly and outgoing ear to your concerns and suggestions, and welcome them to better the service for all members. That's because we consider the members of our service as "family" rather than just customers, and that extra touch goes a long way!

What can you expect in terms of your responsibilities?:

Basically the only thing is to keep your account solvent. That's it. Unfortunately comic services as well as all businesses depend on cash input. Are you wondering what happens if your account goes "into the red"? We have a flexible credit plan based on your individual record with the service. We may stop your books despite the fact that your balance shows a sum owing, depending on how much it is and what your circumstances are. If we don't, however, a message to that effect is automatically printed on your invoice and we'll store the invoice until a new deposit arrives. This allows you the time and flexibility to plan your purchases. That's another example of just a little bit more service

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_____All Marvel Annuals
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_____All Star Squadron
_____Alpha Flight
_____Alien Legion***
_____Atari Force
_____Arak Son of Thunder
_____Aron
_____Avengers
_____Batman
_____Blackhawk
_____Batman & The Outsiders
_____Camelot 3000***
_____Captain America
_____Conan
_____Coyote
_____Crystar
_____Daredevil
_____Dazzler
_____DC Comics Presents
_____***DC Crossing Attractions
_____Defenders
_____Detective Comics
_____Dr. Strange
_____Dr. Who
_____Dreadstar***
_____Fantastic Four
_____Firestorm
_____Flash
_____Gemworld (mini series)
_____G.I. Combat
_____G.I. Joe
_____Green Lantern
_____High Adventures
_____Hulk
_____Infinity Inc.***
_____Iron Man
_____Jemm, Son of Saturn
_____Jonah Hex
_____Justice League
_____Kazar***
_____King Conan
_____Kull
_____LEGION OF SUPER HEROES HIGH QUALITY***
_____Legion of Super Heroes
_____Machine Man
_____Marvel Age (supplied FREE to all members in good standing!)
_____Marvel Fanfare***
_____Marvel Superheroes: The Secret Wars (mini-series)
_____Marvel Tales
_____Marvel Team-Up
_____The Thing
_____Microverals (New Series)
_____Moon Knight (New Series)
_____The Muppets
_____New Mutants
_____New Gods***
_____Omega Men***
_____New Talent Showcase
_____Powerman/Iron Fist
_____Indiana Jones
_____Red Sonja
_____Quest Probe
_____Rom
_____Ronin*** (mini series)
_____Sgt. Rock
_____Spectacular Spiderman
_____Spiderman
_____Star Trek
_____Star Wars
_____Sun Devil***
_____Sub-Mariner
_____Super Powers (Mini Series)
_____Supergirl
_____Superman
_____Swamp Thing
_____TEEN TITANS HIGH QUALITY***
_____Teen Titans
_____Thor
_____Thriller***
_____Transformers
_____Valeria***
_____Warlord
_____West Coast Avengers
_____What If?
_____Wonder Woman
_____WONDER WOMAN HIGH QUALITY***
_____World's Finest Comics
_____X-Men
_____DC Graphic Novels
_____Marvel Graphic Novels
_____All DC Mini Series
_____All Marvel Mini-Series

SECTION 2: ARCHIE/RED CIRCLE COMICS

_____Archie/Red Circle First Issues
_____Archie Giant Series Magazine
_____Archie
_____Archie and Me
_____Archie at Riverdale High
_____Archie's Pals 'n' Gals
_____Archie's T.V. Laughout
_____Betty and Me
_____Betty and Veronica
_____Blue Ribbon Comics (Red Circle)
_____Everything's Archie
_____The Fly (Red Circle)
_____Jughead
_____Katy Keene (new series!)
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_____Life With Archie
_____Mars Tech Robot Warrior (Red Circle)
_____Mighty Crusaders (Red Circle)
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_____Shield (Red Circle)
_____Thunder Bunny (Red Circle)

SECTION 3: SPECIALITY AND DIRECT SALE PUBLISHERS

(Note: almost ALL the items listed in this section are DIRECT SALE ONLY and so we will dispense with the asterisks for them!)

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_____All First First Issues
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_____All Americomics First Issues
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_____Echo of Future Past (Pacific)
_____Elric (Pacific)
_____Groo (Pacific)
_____Alien Worlds (Pacific)
_____Berni Wrightson (Pacific)
_____Artec Ace (Eclipse)
_____DNA Agents (Eclipse)
_____Pacific Presents (Pacific)
_____Mr. Mystic (Pacific)
_____Silver Heels (Pacific)
_____Starslayer (First)
_____First Foto (Pacific)
_____Sonnerset Holmes (Pacific)
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_____Nexus (Capital)
_____Badger (Capital)
_____Sabre (Eclipse)
_____Scimitar Pilot (Eclipse)
_____Mrs. Tree (Eclipse)
_____Twisted Tales (Pacific)
_____Ravens & Rainbows (Pacific)
_____Americomics (Americomics)
_____Vanity (Pacific)
_____Whisper (Capital)
_____Black Diamond (Americomics)
_____Capt Paragon (Americomics)
_____Evangeline (Comico)
_____Mage (Comico)
_____Sun Runner (Pacific)
_____AJ (Comico)
_____Comico Primer (Comico)
_____Grendel (Comico)
_____Evangeline (Comico)
_____Mage (Comico)
_____Sting (Comico)
_____Mars (First)
_____Thunder Agents (Galaxy)
_____Starmasters (Americomics)
_____American Flagg (First)
_____E-Man (First)
_____Jon Sable (First)
_____Warp (First)
_____Grimjack (First)

SECTION 4: CHARLTON COMICS

_____All Charlton First Issues
_____Attack
_____Battlefield Action
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_____Fightin' Army
_____Fightin' Navy
_____Fightin' Marines
_____Ghost Manor
_____Ghostly Haunts
_____Ghostly Tales
_____Haunted (Baron Weinwolf)
_____Scary Tales
_____War (Weird at)

SECTION 5: BRITISH/EAGLE COMICS

_____Judge Dredd***
_____Nemesis***
_____Robohunter***
_____Warrior Magazine

SECTION 6: COMIC DIGESTS

_____All DC Digests
_____All Archie Digests
_____Archie Where R.U.? Digest
_____Archie Comics Digest
_____Best of DC Digest
_____Archie Double Digest
_____Betty/Veronica Comic Digest
_____Jokebook Comics Digest
_____Jughead Jones Digest
_____Jughead With Archie Digest
_____Laugh Comics Digest
_____Little Archie Digest

SECTION 7: ALTERNATIVE COMICS, FANZINES, AND MAGAZINES

_____Amazing Stories (sf)
_____Amazing Heroes (Fantagraphics)
_____Analog (sf)
_____Cerebus the Aardvark (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
_____Cheetah/Eclipse (Him)
_____Cineflex (Him)
_____Cinemagic (Him...Staring)
_____Comic Reader
_____Comics Collector (Krause)
_____Comics Interview (Fictioneer)
_____Comics Journal (Fantagraphics)
_____Distant Soil (Wary)
_____D'Arc Tangent (Fantasy Factory)
_____Don Rosa's Comics (Fantagraphics)
_____Eclipse Monthly (Eclipse)
_____Elfquest (Warp)
_____Epic Magazine (Marvel)
_____Fangoria (Starlog)
_____Fantastic Films (Him)
_____First Kingdom (Plant)
_____Heavy Metal
_____Heavy Metal Specials
_____Isaac Asimov (sf)
_____Journey (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
_____Love and Rockets (Fantagraphics)
_____Mad
_____Mad Specials
_____Marvel Comics Index Series (Pacific)
_____Marvel Super Special (Marvel)
_____National Lampoon
_____National Lampoon Specials
_____Neil the Horse (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
_____Nemo (Fantagraphics)
_____Normal Man (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
_____Omni
_____Omni Specials
_____Prevue Magazine (Supergraphics)
_____Savage Sword of Conan (Marvel)
_____Scott Color Comic (Kitchen Sink/Capital)
_____Starlog Magazine
_____Steve Canyon (Kitchen Sink)
_____Swords of Cerebus (Aardvark-Vanaheim)
_____Vortex (Vortex pubs)
_____Will Eisner Quarterly (Kitchen Sink)

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We've been through tough times and we've been through easy times and we've come a long way since the early days! We hope you'll be joining us to share the good things coming in the future!

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Bernard A. Drew is editor of a weekly newspaper in western Massachusetts. He and his wife recently spent a week's holiday in London and visited with Peter O'Donnell at his Fleet Street office.

FINN? FROM THE OLD NETWORK?
FINN'S VOICE. FINN'S ELEGANT PHRASING — WELL THAT SETTLES WHOSE SIDE WE'RE ON, WILLIE
1999
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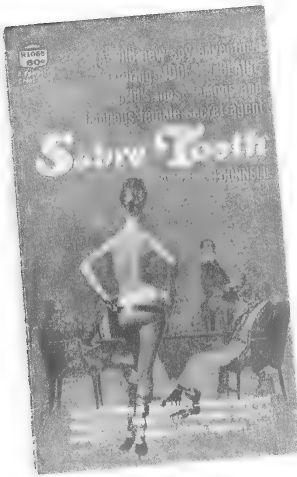
Introducing England's fabulous, feminine answer to James Bond

Modesty Blaise

by Peter O'Donnell

Modesty Blaise~ two decades of adventure



By Bernard A. Drew

Modesty Blaise learned to survive as a post-war orphan in the slums of Turkey and Persia. She received her education in the streets and from an old man, called "The Professor," who took her under his wing. It was he who, in good humor, gave her the name "Modesty." "Blaise" she borrowed from Merlin's tutor.

As she matured, Modesty became a professional thief. With Willie Garvin, her partner and close companion, she took over and controlled a worldwide criminal network for several years. Retiring at an early age to a comfortable life in England, she still longed for adventure — which she and Willie found with great frequency in helping the British Secret Service quell threats to international peace.

Modesty Blaise needs little introduction. She is one of the few literary characters (not to mention the only female) to challenge James Bond's supremacy in the field of espionage and adventure. Her exploits began in a syndicated comic strip in May 1963, and they continue to appear today in more than 32 countries around the globe.

Modesty's creator, Peter O'Donnell, was born in London in 1920. He acquired much of his familiarity with exotic locales through his service in the Royal Signal Corps from 1938-46.

He had begun his writing career at the age of 16, selling short stories and juvenile fiction to the pulps and other magazines. After the war, in the Fifties, he began scripting comic strips, including *Garth*, *Tug Transom*, and *Romeo Brown*. It was while working on *Romeo Brown* that he met artist Jim Holdaway, who would later draw the first *Modesty Blaise* episodes.

The seeds of Modesty's character were sewn in O'Donnell's work on adventure strips and in the romantic serials he wrote for women's magazines. It took him nearly a year to develop Modesty's background, but the preparation time was worth it. When she appeared, Modesty Blaise immediately joined the ranks of such major literary heroes as Sherlock Holmes, Tarzan, and James Bond.

Modesty Blaise is one of the few literary characters (not to mention the only female) to challenge James Bond's supremacy in the field of espionage and adventure.

GUN'S TOO LIGHT— NOT LOADED!
DELIBERATELY MODESTY FILLS THE TRIGGER TWICE, AND HENRY KNOWS THE HAMMER FALL ON EMPTY CYLINDERS
GOT TO LET HIM KNOW THE GUN'S USELESS — IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO FINISH THIS FAST...
1109
© 1984 The Standard.

"It does surprise me that the response has been so broad," O'Donnell said in a recent interview. "I get letters from all over, from all ages, from girls and from professors.

"I write the strips for myself," he said. "I try to make them entertaining. *The Standard*, London's only evening paper (which Modesty has appeared in from the start), serves an upwardly mobile market. It's not in the tabloid style. I don't write down to my readers — I'd be in trouble if I tried to write for all the disparate markets."

Modesty is syndicated to some 92 publications around the world. She appears in papers in Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Hong Kong, and India.

In some ways, O'Donnell is puzzled at the strip's acceptance: "I would have thought it's too sophisticated for a number of countries and I would have thought it would be unpopular in South America, where the machismo society might oppose the Modesty Blaise idea."

Modesty has appeared only sporadically in American newspapers, and there was a split with Doubleday, which published the novels here, after the fifth book.

Still, Modesty fans are many here.

"When writing a book, I always feel strip cartoon is a more comfortable medium — and vice versa."

"I take great pleasure in having a number of long-standing fans in America who write to me and who go to great lengths to get hold of the books. In Houston, there's a delightful bunch of nut-cases, about 10 of them, who order a batch of the latest book from a bookseller in Oxford, have them sent to me for individual inscriptions, and send me a far-too-large check to cover Air Parcel postage to America — with permission for me to send the balance to my favorite charity here, The Sunshine Home for Blind Babies," said the writer. "Aren't they lovely guys? Sometimes they even foregather at some Godforsaken predawn hour to telephone me here in Fleet Street."

Twenty years doesn't seem like such an awful long time, O'Donnell said, since he's been active in many things.

"I keep the strip going and do a book every couple of years," he said. "I do what might entertain me." This has included writing television and movie scripts and stage plays — each with their distinct writing challenges.

He said that plays, for example, require a compression of time and place and usually must be completed in six acts, whereas a film may have 100 or more scenes.

A recent play, *Mr. Fathergill's Murder*, toured successfully for six months in the provinces, but when it opened in London, the critics "murdered it" and it closed in five weeks.

"I'm obviously not too fond of critics," O'Donnell said.

He commented that the writing life is a fairly lonely one. Since the Fifties, he has maintained an office on Fleet Street, above the well-known El Vino liquor establishment. By his own description, he labors in "Dickensian quarters" reached by "climbing four flights of Dickensian stairs." The top-floor aerie does discourage "carbon paper salesmen from interrupting me," he said.

The office is large and well lighted. On the walls are two pieces of Holdaway artwork, one a nude of Modesty, the other a pastel head-and-shoulders action picture. Bookcases are crammed with reference works and English and foreign-language editions of his books. The typewriter is on a tall table behind the desk.

"I obviously could do my writing at home," said O'Donnell, "but I've always tried to keep the work side of life separate from the family side. It can cut into your family life, if you do it at home."

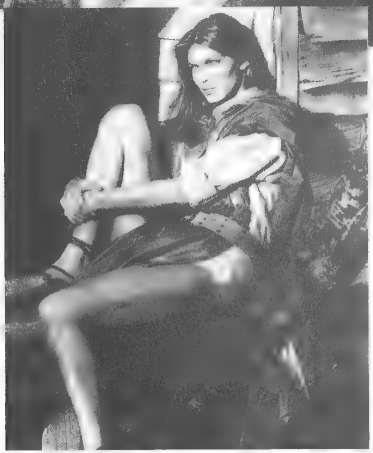
He arrives at his office at 9:30 each morning and stays until 5:30. When he goes home, he forgets his work. It may take him 10 minutes to get things figured out and started again in the morning. But he points with pride to his happy marriage — which has lasted 43 years now and has produced two daughters and three grandchildren.

Writing for different media requires different approaches.

"When writing a book, I always feel strip cartoon is a more comfortable medium — and vice versa," he said. "I would say that I get more satisfaction from having written a book than a strip cartoon story, because the book is entirely my own and allows much more room for the nuance of character. Strip cartoon scripting is technically very demanding, but these stories allow very little elbow room for depth of texture and can only touch the ground in spots."

MODESTY BLAISE
by PETER O'DONNELL
drawn by NEVILLE COLVIN
MODESTY AND MATT LINDSAY PREPARE FOR THEIR DEADLY ISLAND ADVENTURE.
AND NEARBY...
I KNOW HER EX-SERGEANT, BOGUSA — SHE HAS RETIRED AND IS PROBABLY MORE SAVAGE THAN EVER. I'LL JUST SEE IF SHE'S WATCHED.
MODESTY AND MATT LINDSAY DISEMBARK AT THE DERELICT ADMIRALTY OIL OIL FUEL DEPOT ON THE ISLAND OF ST. CHRISTIAN, SOME THIRTY MILES FROM GRAND TURK.
I'LL TAKE A SMALL FLASHLIGHT TOO, MATT. I'LL GET A BETTER PLACE TO RUN DOWN

Monica Vitti played Modesty Blaise in the 1966 film of the same name.



Ann Turkel played the heroine in a 1982 ABC-TV movie.

Modesty Blaise has been twice filmed, with unexceptional results. A 1966 picture directed by Joseph Losey featured Monica Vitti in the title role and co-starred Terence Stamp and Dirk Bogarde. O'Donnell himself wrote the original script for the movie (and later turned it into the first novel), but it was written and re-written by other hands until the final release contained only a single O'Donnell line.

The writer's character was treated somewhat better in a 1982 ABC-TV production with Ann Turkel.

"The producer came to see me," he said. "He had read a number of the books and he wanted to get the character on the screen as closely as possible."

*Souvenir Press has published hardcover editions of all the Modesty Blaise novels; **Night of Morningstar** appeared in 1982.*

*Diana Rigg would have made a fine Modesty Blaise, in Peter O'Donnell's opinion. The actess is seen here in her role as Emma Peel in **The Avengers**.*

If he had been able to cast such a picture 20 years ago, he would have considered Diana Rigg an ideal choice for the part.

It was close, but no cigar.

"On the whole, I'm glad it didn't sell to ABC as a series," he said. "I didn't think it would do the property much good. I realize they had to make it in California, but some of the components didn't look right.

"You have to be philosophical," he said of the film efforts. "You could be lucky like Ian Fleming was. The first James Bond film was of a different style than the books, but it was the right note at the time. I don't suppose Fleming liked it — he wanted David Niven to play Bond. But Saltzman and Broccoli found Sean Connery, who has such presence and moves beautifully."

Appearance and movement would be criteria if O'Donnell were to cast a Modesty Blaise film: "I would want a girl who would move perfectly," he said.

If he had been able to cast such a picture 20 years ago, he would have considered Diana Rigg an ideal choice for the part. In fact, the actress and her husband, Archie Sterling, did negotiate to make a series of four television movies, but the project fell through at the last minute.

"Today, I'm intrigued by the looks and acting ability of Veronica Hamel of *Hill Street Blues*," he said.

In the two decades he has been writing *Modesty Blaise*, O'Donnell said he feels both the character and he have developed.

Now, he said, "I'm getting more careful about forcing them into situations . . . I avoid gratuitous violence, though there has to be violence. The villains are always black-hearted, thoroughly evil, and that gives me the opportunity to have them react violently.

"I've moved away from Bond-type gadgets such as lipstick that shoots out a stream of tear gas, etc. I prefer to get them out of situations using ingenuity and whatever common objects there are at hand. For example, in *Dragon's Claw*, Willie makes a homemade bomb.

"I like to build up their personal lives," he continued. "In each book I reveal a bit more of their past. In *Night of Morningstar*, the first chapters go back to a Network caper. I enjoy doing that and I've gotten some letters asking how it all started."

O'Donnell said it is sometimes hard to keep up with the latest technology in weaponry, he has given up trying to keep Modesty Blaise fashion conscious ("A mini-skirt becomes out of date"), and he doesn't permit characters to use the latest slang.

O'Donnell said he reads widely, and, if he comes upon "something intriguing, it goes into the creative reservoir, and I later may use it."

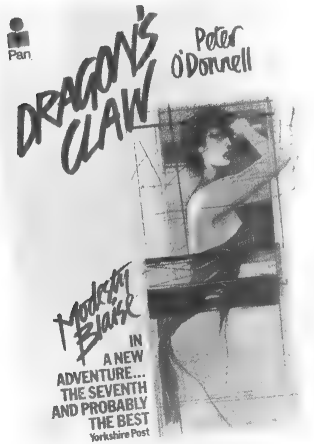
Thus far, that creative reservoir has produced some 53 strip adventures, six short stories, 10 novels, and other miscellaneous projects with Modesty Blaise.

"I've enjoyed doing it," O'Donnell said with a smile.

Modesty Blaise strip adventures by Peter O'Donnell

The Beginning 1-12
The Killing Ground A1-A36
1. La Machine 1-114
2. The Long Lever 115-211
3. The Gabriel Set-Up 212-354
4. Mr. Sun 355-500
5. The Mind of Mrs. Drake 501-612
6. Uncle Happy 613-743
7. Top Traitor 744-873
8. The Vikings 874-992
9. Head Girls 993-1124
10. The Black Pearl 1125-1235
11. The Magnified Man 1236-1349
12. The Jericho Caper 1350-1461
13. Bad Suki 1462-1574
14. Galley Slaves 1575-1688
15. The Red Gryphon 1689-1794
16. Hell-Makers 1795-1919
17. Take-Over 1920-2043
18. The War-Lords of Phoenix 2044-2162
19. Willie the Djinn 2163-2282
20. The Green-Eyed Monster 2283-2388
21. The Death of a Jester 2389-2507
22. The Stone-Age Caper 2508-2627
23. The Puppet Master 2628-2738
24. With Love From Rufus 2739-2846
25. The Bluebeard Affair 2847-2970
26. The Gallows Bird 2971-3077
27. The Wicked Gnomes 3078-3197
28. The Iron God 3198-3309
29. Take Me To Your Leader 3310-3428
30. Highland Witch 3429-3548
31. Cry Wolf 3549-3638a
32. The Reluctant Chaperon 3639-3737a
33. The Greenwood Maid 3738-3829a
34. Those About To Die 3830-3931a
35. The Inca Trail 3932-4031a
36. The Vanishing Dollybirds 4032-4141a
37. The Junk Men 4142-4241a
38. Death Trap 4242-4341a
39. Idaho George 4342-4447a
40. The Golden Frog 4448-4542a
41. Yellowstone Booty 4543-4647a
42. Green Cobra 4648-4737a
43. Eve & Adam 4738-4837a
44. Brethren of Blaise 4838-4932a
45. Dossier on Pluto 4933-5032a
46. The Lady Killers 5033-5127a
47. Garvin's Travels 5128-5227a
48. The Scarlet Maiden 5230-5329a
49. The Moonman 5330-5424a
50. A Few Flowers for the Colonel 5425- 5519a
51. The Balloonatic 5520-5619a
52. Death in Slow Motion 5620-5719a
53. The Alternative Man 5720-5814a

Pan editions have reprinted all the novels in Great Britain. This edition of ***Dragon's Claw*** *came out in 1979.*



Note on artists: Holdaway did drawing through adventure 18; Romero took over through adventure 40; Burns did 41 to 43; Wright worked on 43 and 44; and Colvin has done artwork since 45.

Note on numbering: Since adventure 31, strips have been given five regular numbers a week, and an "a" number on Saturday as the London *Standard* is only published five days a week. The "a" episodes permit newspapers publishing six days a week to have an episode every day, yet *Standard* readers don't feel they've missed anything, since their numbering continues properly.

Note on reprints: *Modesty Blaise* strips have been reprinted in the United States in such publications as *The Menomonee Falls Gazette*, *Comic Strip News*, *Chapters*, *Cartonaggio*, and the on-going series of books from Ken Pierce. Also available in this country on a limited basis have been two British reprint books from Star and issues of the fan magazine *Comic Media*, which also carried reprints.

Modesty Blaise novels by Peter O'Donnell

Modesty Blaise (1965)
Sabre-Tooth (1966)
I, Lucifer (1967)
A Taste For Death (1969)
The Impossible Virgin (1971)
Pieces of Modesty (1972)
The Silver Mistress (1973)
Last Day In Limbo (1976)
Dragon's Claw (1978)
The Xanadu Talisman (1981)
The Night of Morningstar (1982)

Note on the books: *Pieces of Modesty* is a short story collection. Souvenir Press has issued hardcover versions of all the novels in Great Britain. Pan has issued paperback editions of all the novels in Great Britain. Doubleday issued the first five novels in American editions. Fawcett issued the first four novels in American paperback editions. Archival Press has issued a hardcover version of *The Silver Mistress* in the U.S.

The MLJ story-part IV

By Ron Goulart

The MLJ folks brought out the fourth and last of their monthly titles just about as 1940 was getting under way. Over at *Action Comics*, Superman himself was known as The Man of Steel, but that didn't daunt the upstart *Zip Comics* any. In its first issue, cover-dated February 1940, *Zip* introduced its very own Man of Steel. His name was Steel Sterling and you could see him right there on the premiere cover, red-costumed and over-muscled, ripping up enemy warplanes while bullets bounced off his manly chest. Inside the magazine actual drawing ability.

Our hero had an origin that was traumatic enough to have caused the average super-hero to call it quits right then and there. An early caption explains it ably — "To avenge the death of his father, who was murdered and robbed of all his wealth by gangsters, and to avoid a similar end for himself, John Sterling devoted every minute of his youth to dangerous experiments! In one final experiment, the result of which would be success or death! — he hurled himself into a tank of molten steel and fiery known as The Black Knight. For some reason (perhaps because the MLJ colorist didn't bother to read the copy) The Black Knight's outfit was brown and yellow. Later exponents of evil included The Rattler, a fellow who dressed up in a snake suit and gave his victims a shot from his "double hypo of snake venom," and Inferno, who could breathe out fire and was reformed into a super-hero after his encounter with Steel.

Biro dropped the feature in the spring of 1941 to concentrate on his new

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you got not only Steel, but seven other two-fisted heroes, ranging from costumed crime-fighters to turbanned magicians. In this installment, we'll take a look at *Zip Comics* and wind up, at long last, the MLJ saga.

Steel Sterling was drawn by Charles Biro and written by the magazine's editor, Abner Sundell. Since Biro had been doing mostly cute comedy fillers until a few months earlier, he still wasn't completely at home in the straight adventure field. His anatomy was shaky, as was his grasp of perspective. But Biro had a strong sense of action. His early pages, though often crudely drawn, have movement and life. Throughout his career, Biro's ideas for grabbing attention and holding the reader would always be several steps ahead of his chemicals! The test realized his life-ambition. He emerged 'Steel Sterling,' with all the attributes of this sturdiest of metals!! As a blind to both police and underworld, Steel Sterling adopts another personality. He poses as John Sterling, four flushing private investigator and 'twin brother' of the famous *Steel!*"

Included in the SS stock company were Dora Cummings, pretty dark-haired daughter of a world-famous scientist, Clancy, a fat red-headed patrolman (if you were fat and named Clancy, there wasn't much else you could do in Forties comics except be a cop), and Alec Looney, a skinny foul-up who assisted John Sterling in his private eye business. The most frequently met villain in early issues was a costumed rogue comic-book ventures with Lev Gleason. Carl Hubbell took over, followed by Irving Novick. Novick's Steel Sterling was much better drawn, but he lacked some of the flamboyance of Biro's lumpier version.

Zip offered two more costumed heroes, neither of whom had any superpowers. The Scarlet Avenger (not to be confused with The Crimson Agenger, doing business over in *Detective Comics*) wore a snappy bright-green suit and a scarlet cloak and mask. He was "the man who never smiles" and had "dedicated his life to the extermination of crime, and for the accomplishment of this purpose he has brought into play his super-scientific brain." Most of his early troubles were caused by a sexy and extremely tall red-haired villainess

named Texa. Novick drew this one. Edd Ashe illustrated the adventures of Mr. Satan, a chap who did his gang-busting in a cape and skin-tight costume topped with devil horns. Although you'd have expected a hero with this many affinities to The Prince of Darkness to wear a red suit, Mr. Satan's uniform was lavender.

There was one other masked man on the early *Zip* staff. See if you can guess his name. He was a cowboy hero who rode a white horse and wore a black domino mask and white Stetson. That's right: Nevada Jones.

Rounding out the line-up were a jungle man, a matched pair of daredevil aviators, a soldier of fortune, and a magician. Kalthar was a blond jungle lord and he had the handy knack, brought off with the aid of witch doctor magic, of growing to the height of 15 feet. War Eagles featured a set of twins, "two American polo players who join the RAF." Captain Valor was a red-haired ex-Marine who did his adventuring in the trouble-filled Orient. Mort Meskin provided the excellent artwork. The last act of the bill was Zambini, the Miracle Man — "The master of magic

STEEL! YOU-YOU SACRILEGIOUS HOUND! YOU'LL BE SAFE NOW! GET HOLD OF CLANCY AND LOONEY AND MEET ME AT THE PRISON!
NO, THEY WON'T, DORA! INFERNO IS OUT OF JAIL AND SEEING YOUR DAD THIS WAY MAY KILL HIM!
I WILL STEEL! AND ON OUR WAY WE'LL DROP OFF MY KIDNAPPERS AT THE BIG BLUE HOUSE!
© 1984 by Archie Comics Group

has many miraculous powers, but the greatest is his ability to compel an evil force to return like a boomerang to the place where it started. Zambini's services are free, but he will serve only on the side of justice!"

Mr. Satan and Kalthar got their pink slips after the ninth issue. (I'd hate to have been the one to fire a guy who was 15 feet tall.) In #10 (January 1941) a somewhat violent kid fantasy by R.L. Golden was added. Dicky in the Magic Forest took place "in the realm of fancy at no particular place, at no particular time." Also coming aboard that month was Red Reagan of the Homicide Squad, which began with these stirring words — "*The Homicide Squad* — a name that strikes terror into the lecherous hearts of the underworld."

MLJ introduced its first teen-age character in *Zip* #18 (September 1941). His name was Wilbur, and he got into the saddle-shoe, bowtie, and high-school letter-sweater business two months ahead of the better-known Archie.

Black Jack, a red-costumed crime-fighter with an ace of spades emblazoned on his chest, made his debut in #20 (November 1941). Appropriately enough, his favorite opponent was a hooded rascal known as Poker Face. By this time, MLJ was in its bloody phase (which coincided, oddly enough, with its teen-age and humor phase), and the Black Jack adventures were full of bloodshed and sharp weapons.

His name was Wilbur, and he got into the saddle-shoe, bowtie, and high-school letter-sweater business two months ahead of the better-known Archie.

An even bloodier hero showed in #27 (July 1942) in the person of The Web. A red-haired fellow, he wore a green-and-yellow costume which included a cape resembling a giant spider web. In everyday life, he was a bespectacled professor of criminology named John Raymond. Perhaps his academic background accounts for the somewhat flowery way he often addressed the vicious Nazis and Japanese he frequently tangled with — "You've spun your own doom already . . . You've woven a trap of hate and crime you can't escape!" or "And so you see how a web of evil which reached its slimy skein clear across the world finally ended in death and destruction for the very men who had spun it. It will always be that way . . . criminals will forever meet doom emeshed in the web of crime they themselves spin!"

The professor spun his crime-fighting web in various parts of the war-torn world, including the United States and Europe. He was especially fond of torture chambers, locales where you encountered "the shrill agonizing shrieks of humans in terrible suffering and the low piteous moans of those praying for death." The Web failed to ensnare sufficient readers into his parlor and he was retired after #38 (July 1943). Mort Leav was the original artist, with Bob Montana depicting The Web on several covers.

The Cost of Collecting:

	Good	Fine	Mint
BLACK HOOD COMICS (Formerly Hangman No 2 8; Laugh Comics No. 20 on)			
No. 9 Winter 1944-No. 19 Summer 1946			
9-The Hangman & The Boy Buddies cont'd	15.00	45.00	90.00
10-The Hangman & Dusty, the Boy Detective app., Fuje a	9.20	27.50	55.00
11-Dusty app., no Hangman	6.75	21.00	42.00
12,13	6.35	21.00	42.00
14-Lib exposed	8.00	22.00	44.00
(Also see Archie's Super-Hero Special Digest No. 2)			
HANGMAN COMICS (Special No. 1, Black Hood No. 9 on)			
No. 2, Spring 1942 — No. 8, Fall 1943			
MLJ Magazines			
2-The Hangman, Boy Buddies begin	32.00	95.00	225.00
3-8	18.00	54.00	120.00
NOTE: Page a-7 (3), 8 (3), c-3			
JACKPOT COMICS (Jolly Jingles No. 10 on)			
Spring 1941 — No. 9, Spring 1943			
MLJ Magazines			
1-The Black Hood Mr Justice, Steel Sterling & Sgt. Boyle begin; Biro c	54.00	160.00	350.00
2	27.00	80.00	175.00
3	24.00	70.00	150.00
4-Archie begins (on sale 12/41) — (Also see Pep Comics No. 22); Montana c	64.00	190.00	425.00
5	27.00	80.00	175.00
6-9	25.00	75.00	160.00
SHIELD WIZARD COMICS			
Summer 1940 — No. 13, Spring 1944			
MLJ Magazines			
1 (V1 No. 5 on inside) - Origin The Shield by Irving Novick & The Wizard by Ed Ashe Jr. Flag c	62.00	185.00	395.00c
2-Origin The Shield retold, intro Wizard's sidekick, Roy	32.00	95.00	215.00
3, 4	21.00	62.00	135.00
5-Dusty, the Boy Detective begins	18.00	55.00	120.00
6-8 6-Roy the Super Boy begins	17.00	50.00	100.00
9, 10	14.00	42.50	85.00
11-13	12.50	37.50	75.00
ZIP COMICS			
Feb 1940 — No. 47, Summer 1944			
MLJ Magazines			
1-Origin Kalthar the Giant Man, The Scarlet Avenger, & Steel Sterling, Mr Satan, Nevada Jones & Zambini, the Miracle Man, War Eagle Captain Valor begins	58.00	175.00	380.00
2	30.00	90.00	190.00
3	24.00	70.00	150.00
4, 5	19.00	57.00	125.00
6-9 9-Last Kalthar & Mr Satan	17.00	52.00	110.00
10-Inferno, the Flame Breather begins, ends No. 13	17.00	50.00	100.00
11, 12 11-Inferno without costume	13.00	40.00	80.00
13-19 17-Last Scarlet Avenger 18-Wilbur begins	13.00	40.00	80.00
20-Origin Black Jack	18.00	55.00	115.00
21-26 25-Last Nevada Jones 26-Black Witch begins, last Captain Valor	13.00	40.00	80.00
27-Intro Web	18.00	55.00	115.00
28-Origin Web	18.00	55.00	115.00
29, 30	11.00	32.50	65.00
31-38 34-1st Applejack app. 35-Last Zambini, Black Jack 38-Last Web issue	7.75	23.00	46.00
39-Origin Red Rube	7.75	23.00	46.00
40-47, 45-Wilbur ends	4.75	14.00	28.00
NOTE: Biro a-5, 9; c-5, 9. Meskin a-7, 3, 5-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16 at least.			

By the time The Web had been swept out of *Zip*, it was a somewhat different magazine than it had been earlier. Humor had crowded out many of the serious features, and you found stuff like The Slaphappy Applejacks, a hillbilly feature by Harry Sahle; Ginger, a strip about a red-headed teen-age girl by Harry Sahle; and Senor Banana, a Latino with a fat sidekick named Stencho Odora, drawn by, of all people, Harry Sahle. *Zip* #39 saw the arrival of Red Rube. This starred a red-haired mock super-hero and was a godawful, heavy-handed spoof of Captain Marvel. Instead of "Shazam," youthful newsboy Reuben Reuben shouted, "Hey, Rube!" Ed Robbins started this one, Bill Vigoda finished it off nine issues later. The entire magazine shut down at the same time, with its 47th issue in the summer of 1944.

After starting up four monthlies, MLJ tried a few quarterlies. The first of these was *Shield-Wizard Comics*, which appeared in the summer of 1940. What you got was a team-up of the star of *Pep* with the star of *Top-Notch*, featuring separate adventures of each. Usually three of the Shield, two of the Wizard. In issues #3 and 4 Mort Meskin did an impressive, though a mite rushed, job drawing the moustached Wizard and his companion Roy the Super-Boy. The following spring *Jackpot Comics* hit the stands, offering a hero from each of the four monthlies in separate adventures.

SAME LABEL MARK! ARE WE?
WELL, WELL! LOOKS LIKE I BROKE INTO A RATS NEST!
THE GIANT HOWLS IN PAIN AND RAGE AND REACHES FOR DICKY WITH HIS HAND!
CRACK!
A MOMENT LATER...THE DISSECTED MONSTER SINKS TO THE GROUND, HIS EVIL DAYS ENDED!
NOW TO FREE THE SKY-VINO CAPTIVES!
IT'S HIM THE AVENGER! GIVE IT TO HIM!
YEZ! THE KINGLENDER DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
NO SOONER SAID THAN DONE!
Zambini THE MIRACLE MAN
RETURNING TO AMERICA AFTER A TOUR OF THE WORLD, ZAMBINI STOPS OFF IN KENTUCKY TO VISIT KARL GOOD OWNER OF THE FAMOUS CAVE.
THIS NURSE MUST HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE MURDERED FAMILY'S BOY WHO DIED HERE!!
© 1984 by Arc

Zip Comics *and* ***Shield-Wizard Comics*** *ran the adventures of an assortment of characters. The samples shown here and on preceding pages are from* ***Zip*** *#13 (April 1941) and* ***Shield-Wizard*** *#4. (Top, across:) Zambini, the Miracle Man; The Scarlet Avenger; Captain Valor; The Wizard (with Roy the Super-Boy). (Down the page under Zambini:) Dicky in the Magic Forest; The Scarlet Avenger "and his beautiful operative, Inez Courtney"); Steel Sterling; Nevada Jones; and Red Reagan of the Homicide Squad. And that's not to mention some of the cheeriest bats ever seen in comic books. (That's Roy the Super-Boy pounding a costumed villain to a pulp at the end of the article.)*

The basic quartet consisted of Steel Sterling, The Black Hood, Mr. Justice, and Sergeant Boyle. Archie was added in #4, and other humor strips arrived later, with even Cubby the Bear doing a turn. *Jackpot* got through nine issues before expiring in the spring of 1943.

The Hangman, one of the more violent MLJ vigilantes, got his own magazine late in 1941. There were three of his gruesome cases to be found in each issue — "Cruise of the Skeletons," "The Voice of Doom," "Gallows and the Ghoul," etc. He shared his magazine with The Boy Buddies, a dull duo made up of the Shield's sidekick Dusty and the Wiz' Roy. Hangman was tossed out of his own magazine after the eighth issue (Fall 1943), and it became *Black Hood*. When that one closed up shop in the middle of 1946, MLJ was just about out of the hero business.

MLJ, eventually changing its name to Archie Comics, continues to this day. Noted mostly for purveying the antics of funny teenagers, it has made occasional attempts to revive some of the heroes we've been talking about in our modest history: The Shield, Steel Sterling, The Fox, The Comet, etc.

Thus far all attempts have met with less than success, and one reason may be that these brash, flamboyant, and sometimes dippy superheroes and masked avengers were much better suited to the hardboiled yet comparatively innocent decade of the Forties.

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AFT

SELLING YOUR COMIC BOOK COLLECTION

By David Puckett

Comic-book prices are increasing every day, and many comics fans are getting discouraged. When you last went to the local "specialty shop" to get the current month's issues, you ended up shelling out 60¢ to 75¢ for the regular newsstand titles and may have found no money left for the titles sold only at that store: titles such as *Cerebus*, *Camelot 3000*, and *Elfquest*.

It seems to be almost impossible to buy all of the comics every month. Even the days of the 50¢ comic are long gone, and every month you consider dropping another title from your shopping list or quitting collecting the output of an entire company.

You have come to the point all comic collectors reach at one time or another with this hobby. You're mad and you want to sell off all of your comics and give up collecting.

Maybe it's not *that* extreme. Maybe you're simply deciding to discontinue buying specific titles and, therefore, to sell back issues.

Now you need some advice on *how* to sell your comics.

The most important advice I can give you is: *Do not sell your collection!*

In a few years what you've accumulated is going to be worth more than it is right now (as long as you have the good sense to keep your comics in nice condition).

"...YOUR MARVEL COLLECTION OR YOUR LIFE!"

Finally, you may change your mind and want those comics back. It has happened to more than one collector.

However, due to a lot of circumstances (including sudden large expenses such as college or illness) you may want to sell your comics anyway. The first thing you'll probably think is something along the lines of: "I'll look these comics up in a price guide! I'll make a fortune on my comics!"

Wrong.

Contrary to popular belief, price-guide listings do not necessarily reflect what you can get for your comic books. Guide prices have been obtained from a cross-section of comic-book *dealers'* prices (what *they* asked for those issues). Remember, the dealer has to make his living from comics sales, so he needs to make a profit. This means that the prices are determined by what a dealer can get for an issue, not what *you* can get by selling it to him.

In a few years what you've accumulated is going to be worth more than it is right now (as long as you have the good sense to keep your comics in nice condition).

And a dealer often faces a fluctuating market.

For one example, assume a dealer gets a "hot" comic. *Howard the Duck* #1 was "hot" at one time. If the dealer had thought it would be a big seller, he might have invested in 100 copies. Since so many collectors wanted a copy, he might have then raised its price. The more demand, the higher the price — but, eventually, anyone who wanted a copy at that price got one.

If this dealer was asked (for a price guide) his current going price when a comic-book issue was at its hottest point, the price he was getting was high — so the price he gave the guide was high.

If, not long after that, everyone finally got a copy, the demand for copies at that price would have fallen. The dealer still might have had 50 copies left that he couldn't sell (although the issue would still be listed as "hot").

The dealer then might decide to lower his price to move stock. The price would get lower and lower — at about the time price guide publishers would be asking his going price for the issue once again.

The issue that had sold for $15 in mint condition just 12 months earlier *now* might sell for $7 in the same condition. Eventually, this issue (as I've seen in similar cases) could end up in the dealer's "Dollar Special" box.

The obvious lesson to be learned is: Buy comics at a low price and then try to sell them when they reach their price peak. It's the same principle which governs the stock market: Buy low, sell high. The trick is to know when it's as low or as high as it's going to get.

Some general advice: When you buy comics, put them in plastic bags, grading them as you do so. Do not use bags designed for food storage; there are many kinds of plastic bags made specifically for comics storage and preservation.

Another helpful thing to do when you buy comics is to label them *on the bag.* Use a pressure-sensitive label for each copy and write on it the following information: title, number, date, and condition. You may want to specify any defects and add the price you paid for the copy. You may even list the items in it and who wrote and drew it. This will be handy whether you just want to reread it from time to time — or sell it.

When you do go to a comic dealer keep the following in mind, so that you won't be too disappointed at the price you'll be offered:

1) Most dealers pay only 25% to 30% of price-guide listings of most titles. Those issues that are listed at the price of $1000 *might* bring you $300 to $400.

2) Most dealers are not interested in paying more than half of the price-guide price on rare comics from the '40s, prime pre-Code titles, *early* issues of low-numbered comics from the '50s and '60s in very good *or better* conditions, or currently hot new titles.

3) Many dealers will not offer you a cash deal in its entirety. They'll offer a partial trade, instead. Occasionally, you will find a dealer who will make you a 50-50 offer: half cash and half trade value. That's not a bad option, because, although you will still have some comics to sell, at least you can carefully invest this trade amount in books of singularly higher individual value. They'll be easier to sell to someone else.

Why do comic-book dealers have these policies? Look at it from the standpoint of the dealer for a moment; he has a *lot* of overhead. Merely setting up a table in the huckster's room of a comics (or science-fiction) convention can cost from $30 to $50 — and maybe even more.

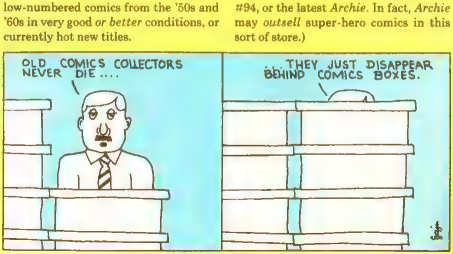
If he has a shop, he has to pay store rent, utilities, employees' salaries, maintenance, insurance, city taxes, state taxes, federal taxes, and advertising costs — and he has to buy boxes, bags, stickers, signs, a cash register, and inventory. And those are only a few of the expenses he has to face constantly.

Dealers are in business to make a living, like anyone else. Remember that what is a hobby to you is a means of earning a living to them. They have themselves (and perhaps a family) to support and bills to pay, just like everyone else.

It's the same principle which governs the stock market: Buy low, sell high.

Are there *other* ways to sell a comics collection — any that could bring in more money?

I would advise you to forget the notion of selling your collection to the non-specialty "book trader" stores, because most won't pay over a nickel or dime per comic, and the greatest percentage of these shops' owners couldn't care less if the comic is a copy of *X-Men* #94, or the latest *Archie*. In fact, *Archie* may *outsell* super-hero comics in this sort of store.)



Want to try yard sales? Then you'd better have a *lot* of issues for which you'll charge no more than 25¢, because that's as much as you can expect to get — and your comics will be handled a lot, and roughly, which will reduce their desirability.

Flea markets are a better bet than yard sales or garage sales, because more comic-book collectors go to them. Just remember that the people who generally go to flea markets are there to find bargains, so you'll have to reduce your prices to make sales.

What *can* you do about selling your comics to avoid losing a lot of money?

My suggestion is to try to sell them through the mail and make a greater amount per book by advertising them

test current titles and numbers and your best stock; grade their conditions correctly. (Comic books that look "good" to you may be only "fair," according to common usage. Price guides usually have a section devoted to determining comic-book conditions. Study it carefully. Use the "Photo Grading Guide" and "Color Guide to Defects" in this issue.)

When in doubt, grade your comics in the worse of two borderline conditions. A reputation as a "tough" grader improves your chances of repeat customers and means less hassle from people returning comics with which they're not satisfied.

Encourage collectors to send you their want lists. This will save you room on your display and ad copy to give you room for the listing of possibly more important books, and it may also make your ad smaller (thus saving you some money).

Illustrate your ad. Small but neat illustrations from scrap comics can attract attention (but be sure to run proper copyrights). If you decide to use illustrations, but the magazine is going to lay out your ad, be sure to leave enough space to insert those pictures.

Carefully check the advertising requirements in any publication. Some publications will reproduce your ads as is, if they are camera-ready.

Others may typeset your ad copy for you as a complimentary service (or for a small extra fee).

Calculate your ad space or word count carefully. Mistakes in your text can delay publication of your ad. Sometimes (*many* times) having your ad in that certain issue at the right time makes all the difference in doing well in selling your merchandise — so don't cause problems which can lead to delays. For example, if the magazine's ad policy is that you send payment with an ad, don't send the ad and ask to be billed.

Use black ink or a new, black typewriter ribbon on white paper. This combination reproduces most satisfactorily and is the easiest to read.

Use your imagination. An ad which looks different from others on the same page will attract the most attention. But make sure it fits the publication's requirements, is in good taste, and is legible.

Divide your merchandise into sections (companies, artists, etc.) and clearly define the prices. Make sure the buyer knows if the price listed is for a number of items or per item. If you have something exceptionally rare for sale, you should consider a mail auction. The return is best, but the procedure is more complex.

Try out several different displays before deciding which one looks best. Professionalism is the key word here. Use rub-on transfer letters as an attention getter. And proofread your text!

Don't forget to give your name and address (and phone number, if you choose) clearly on an ad. And you'll be wise to ask your customers to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope so that you can refund money when necessary and inform them that you are sending the order.

If you can't afford a large ad, try the smaller, classified ones. You'd be amazed at the number of collectors who read these ads *before* checking the display ads. Often, they know, there are real bargains in the less-expensive ads.

Give the buyers a break on prices. After all, if you were *only* into collecting to make a buck, you have missed an important part of being a collector: The sheer fun of it all! You can sell your comics for less than price-guide prices and still make a lot more than you can selling to a dealer, so give your fellow fans a break.

When you mail your orders, reinforce them with cardboard and wrap them securely in newspaper, which you should then seal with tape. Put a mailing label on this package and then put the package in a padded mailing envelope which you have also labeled. (Remember, your pricing should reflect the expense this will require.)

What if all this is just too complicated? There are other things you can try. Publications from your area can bring results and put you in touch with fans living near you whom you've never met. You'll save postage and handling costs — and may be able to arrange deals of a sort impossible any other way. (Maybe you can trade a set of *The New Teen Titans* for a used but high-quality stereo system.)

In this sort of case, "word of mouth" helps a lot. Local collectors may want those comics for their own collections and will make you a better offer than comic-book dealers.

In any case, if you're sure you no longer want your comics, sell them to someone who *does* want them. You'll have the satisfaction of passing your comics along for someone else to appreciate, treasure, and enjoy.

If you can't afford a large ad, try the smaller, classified ones.

properly and personally.

You can do this through a number of publications which specialize in comics and hobbies. These publications are: fanzines (***The Comics Buyer's Guide*** is the leader of publications with reasonable ad rates which specializes in this field of collecting), price guides, and hobby magazines.

[Editor's Note: It should be pointed out, lest we be accused of bias, that ***CBG*** *is, like* ***Comics Collector****, published by Krause Publications. However, it really* ***is*** *the leading advertising medium in comics fandom. Considering the circulation of* ***Comics Collector****, a classified ad can be profitable here, too, for a fan with a large collection to sell. For 20¢ per word, you can reach more than 110,000 fellow fans with the news that you have a collection — or an especially rare issue — to sell.]*

I really don't suggest you advertise in comic books themselves, since comic-book publishers have to charge a rate too high for someone selling a small collection.

Advertisements which run on comic-book pages composed of small ads usually are taken by dealers with an enormous number of comics on hand, possibly hundreds of thousands of them. Such ads are extremely expensive — another cost some dealers have to meet. That, in turn, means such dealers have to charge a higher price just to stay in business.

Naturally, you will have additional costs for postage, handling, and insurance, but you can advertise these costs as extra in your ads.

Make a nice ad display. List your hot-

WHAT COMICS SHOULD YOU COLLECT?

The number one rule in collecting comics is this: Buy only the comics you like to read.

By Mike Benton

You go to the newstand or your favorite comic book store. You have $5 to spend. Suddenly, you're in trouble. There are 136 different comic titles to choose from. If you want every comic book that came out this month, be prepared to drop a hundred bucks. Just to keep up with all the Marvel titles alone, you'd probably need a part-time job. And if you're thinking about collecting back issues as well — better think again.

You're about to make the hardest decision of a collector's life. What comics should you buy regularly? Which back issues should you try to get? In short, what should you collect?

Comic-book collectors have a monumental task. Over the last 50 years, there have been well over 50,000 different comic books published. No one can collect them all. You pick and choose, develop some collecting approach, and then systematically try to reach your collecting goals.

For some collectors, the goal is a complete run of *X-Men* or *Daredevil*. Others want to have every comic published by Marvel or to get all the comic books with Frank Miller artwork.

And there are still a few madmen who are trying to get a copy of every DC comic published or all the comics published before 1960 or even a copy of every comic book ever printed. These "completists" are easy to recognize. They work three jobs to support their collecting habit and sleep in the kitchen because every other room in the house is filled with comic books.

If you're a completist, you probably don't have time to finish reading this article. But if you've finally decided you have to limit your collecting to something more reasonable, read on.

The number one rule in collecting comics is this: Buy only the comics you like to read. It seems simple, but many collectors fall into the trap of buying a title just because they want to keep up a complete run or because they think the title is a good investment.

Buy what you enjoy reading and you'll never go wrong.

That's the way most comic-book readers get hooked into becoming collectors in the first place. They start their collections by buying a single title with a character they like (Conan, for instance, or Wolverine) and then branch out to other comics with the same character. Soon, they start buying other titles published by the same company, and then comics from different companies, and finally they develop their own individual approach to collecting.

One collector who concentrated on a single character as the basis for a collection is Cat Yronwode, an editor at Eclipse Comics and a columnist for ***The Comics Buyer's Guide***:

"Like most people, my collection has gone through a lot of changes. My original collection was a complete run of all the Marvel comics. I held onto it for about eight years, and then sold it when I moved out to the country. After a few years of life without comics, I picked up a copy of *Strange Tales* with Steve Ditko's Dr. Strange.

"I was hooked again, but this time I collected only Dr. Strange. After I completed the *Strange Tales* run, I branched out to collecting *all* the comics with Dr. Strange appearances — even one-panel cameos and all the crossovers.

"This passion for having a complete Dr. Strange collection lasted for three years. By the end of that time, I had prepared an index to every magical spell that Dr. Strange had uttered. Marvel Comics now uses that index in their work."

Her experiences are the same as many other collectors. Often, a comics fan becomes totally fascinated by one character. This fascination turns into an obsession for collecting *every* comic book that character appeared in. And so, quite innocently, a comic collector is born.

From collecting a single character or title, it's easy to expand your interests to *all* the titles published by that particular company. At this point, the collector is no longer a Spider-Man or Superman fan, but a Marvel or DC completist.

"I'm getting nostalgic for the times when I was still able to afford to buy the comics I was nostalgic about."

Consider the early collecting experiences of Dean Mullaney, publisher of Eclipse Comics:

"I learned to read on Dick Sprang's Batman when I was 4 years old," said Dean. "From 1958 to 1962, I was a Batman fan totally. Batman got me interested in other DC comics, such as *World's Finest*, which led me to the Superman family titles. By the end of 1962, I was a big DC collector. Then came Marvel in 1963. That was it. For

As far as is known, there are only two people in the world who have every Marvel comic published from 1940 to the present.

the next five years, I collected *only* Marvel company comics."

Are you a company man? Collecting comics by company is both easy and challenging. You'll probably never run out of comics to collect, but, then again, you'll probably never get them all. As far as is known, there are only two people in the world who have *every* Marvel comic published from 1940 to the present. So far, no one has a complete DC collection (not even DC Comics itself!), although one California family of collectors claims to be only 23 issues away.

Concentrating on a specific comics company may be frustrating, since it is difficult — if not impossible — to complete such a collection. You might do better to specialize. A specialized collection reflects your unique taste in comics. Some people specialize in collecting comics by a specific artist, while others concentrate on genres, like westerns or horror.

Having a speciality interest in collecting comics can bring you much fun and sometimes a little fame — maybe even an editorship of a comic magazine! It happened to Cat Yronwode.

"I picked up the Harvey *Spirit* comic in 1967," she said, "and I was in love with Eisner's work. I got the Warren and Kitchen reprints of the Spirit sections next, and gradually started to specialize in the artwork of Will Eisner. When the *Spirit* comic magazine needed a person knowledgable about Eisner's work, I was qualified."

Collecting by artist is a popular and satisfying way to learn about comics and their creators. For one thing, you'll have to seek out and collect several companies and titles, since an artist's work is rarely limited to a single character or company. This can turn into a real treasure hunt, as you seek out the more obscure and hard-to-find material by an artist such as Steve Ditko, Bob Powell, or Gene Colan.

"I consider myself the World's Foremost Expert on Gene Colan," said Dean Mullaney, who has collected comics for more than 20 years. "I specialize in finding unknown works by Gene Colan and am on my way to completing an index to all the man's work. The fun thing about collecting this way is that I'll discover some comic that across a copy of *Two-Gun Kid* #7. Not your usual hot item, right? But inside was a story that sure looked like early Gene Colan work to me. So I mailed the book to Colan himself to help me positively identify it for my index. That's the fun in collecting — unearthing and making known the works of the various artists."

Collecting by character or title, by company, or by artist are the usual ways fans shape their collections to reflect their own interests. But there are other, more unusual, ways. Consider the Famous Dentist story:

While I was interviewing one of the top dentists in the country for a medical magazine, the subject of comic books came up in our discussion of the reading material dentists leave in their waiting rooms:

"I like to leave old junk comics in my reception room," said the dentist. "I can get some worn-out comics from the 1960s for about a buck each at a local flea market. The kids get excited about seeing old comics, and it takes their minds off the wait."

"Do you collect any comics yourself?" I asked.

He smiled. "Well, I'll show you something I don't usually pull out." He went to a back bedroom and came back with a stack of about 50 comic books. "Here's my collection. Took about 10 years to assemble."

I couldn't make heads or tails out of the stack. There were issues of *Superman* from the '50s, a *Bugs Bunny* about 15 years old, one or two Marvels, an EC, two *Little Lulu* comics, three *Archies*, and so on. "Kind of a mixed bag," I said of the assortment.

"Only collection like it in the world," he said. "Did you notice all the covers?" I looked again. Every one had a cover with either a dentist's chair or prominently featured teeth. The man was a collector of tooth covers.

Collecting by cover content is a way to give your collection a distinctive flavor. Some collectors specialize in "infinity" covers — covers that show the comic character reading a comic book on the cover of which is another picture of the character reading a comic book, and on until infinity.

One interesting cover collection by an Arizona fan consists of covers which do *not* feature the title character. World War II covers are popular among collectors, as well as covers with graphic pictures of violence, horror, sex and torture.

"The most bizarre cover collection I ever saw," a major East Coast dealer told me, "was in the home of an interior decorator. He had his library room painted blazing pink, and all along the walls were comic books framed in lime green. The only common element about the collection was that every framed comic had a predominant lemon yellow background, which certainly gave the room a striking effect. He collected comic books entirely because of the color of their covers. I don't think he ever read the books, just framed them in his shocking pink room."

Most collectors build their collections in a more logical and systematic way. For some, the price of a back issue alone may determine what they collect.

Many collectors, especially beginners, often do not expand their collecting interests because of the high prices of certain back-issue comics. They think that if they concentrate on only a single title or recent comics, they can "complete" their collection.

One interesting cover collection by an Arizona fan consists of covers which do not feature the title character.

Actually, no collector ever completes his collection. He just finds something else to collect! There are so many different types of comics published in the last 50 years that you're sure to develop new interests as you refine and define your collection.

Too often collectors become myopic. They can't see past their limited collecting interests, and that's too bad because they miss a lot of fun. Having a complete set of *The New Teen Titans* is exciting, but don't stop there.

Here are eight ways you can define

your collecting interests, with the advantages and disadvantages of each approach:

1) By character or title. This is the way most people start collecting comics. They want all the issues with their favorite character.

Advantage: It's an easy way to collect. You know exactly what you need to finish your collection.

Disadvantage: It's too limiting. Even if the title is a long-running one, you'll still only see the work of a few artists and writers.

2) By company or comic line. This is a monumental task, unless you choose one of the smaller companies.

Advantage: You become an expert about one specific company, and become able to identify all the creators who worked for them.

Disadvantage: You may never complete your collection. More importantly, you'll find yourself buying comics you really aren't interested in which happen to be published by the company whose comics you collect.

3) By artist. Many advanced collectors choose one or two artists whose work they follow throughout their career.

Advantage: You develop a deep appreciation and knowledge of one comics creator whose work may span several titles, companies, and years. You may eventually be able to contribute valuable knowledge about your selected artist and get quite an education in comic books.

Disadvantage: Unless the artist has produced only recent or limited comics work, you may never complete your collection. You may also buy comics with only one story by your favorite artist, with the rest of no interest to you. Finding which issues have artwork by the artist may be well-nigh impossible — but many collectors like the challenge!

4) By genre. This means collecting only western comics or horror comics or love comics or funny-animal comics — regardless of company, title, or artist.

Advantage: You'll have a very broad and general collection which includes many major companies and titles. If you collect western or war or teen-humor comics, you won't have as much competition for back issues as those collectors who specialize in super-hero comics.

Disadvantage: You'll miss out on a lot of excellent comic books and on artists who did not work in that genre. For example, if you collect only horror comics, you'll never see the work of Carl Barks or Walt Kelly.

5) By time period. This collector chooses a period which has the greatest number of comics of interest to him. For example, some collectors concentrate on only the Golden Age comics of the '40s; others go for the comics of the early '50s or the Silver Age books from the '60s.

Advantage: You can focus on only those books that you read or liked during a certain period. By limiting your collection by year boundaries, it is possible to complete your collection. One collector has an interesting variation on this approach: He's trying to get every comic book which was published during his year of birth!

Disadvantage: You can miss some important comics history, if you're too selective. One collector has a collection of only comics published *after* 1970. It's best to have a representative sampling of comics from all time periods, so you can have a good feel for the history of comics.

6) By cover.

Advantage: You can assemble an impressive art exhibit when all of your comic covers follow some theme. You can collect al types of comics, from all different companies. It makes a very good conversation piece.

Disadvantage: You have to see the comics before you buy them. Collecting by cover means that you must find the comic book first at a convention or back-issue store. It's usually very difficult to buy comics by mail, since you can't see the cover first.

7) By personal quirk. Here's your chance to really demonstrate your individuality. You can collect *anything*, but it should have some sort of theme or order, no matter how bizarre. Several collectors specialize in comics that deal with Catholicism. A few go for comics with panels of women being spanked. No matter what your fetish or religious denomination, there's a comic collecting approach for you!

Advantage: This is the ultimate individual collection.

Disadvantage: No one may care.

8) A combination of the above. Most collectors do this anyway. They may choose a particular company to specialize in, and then only collect comics from certain years by that company.

Advantage: You can customize your interests to a fine point. For example, one Kentucky collector specializes in books published by Charlton comics from 1956 to 1958 which contain Steve Ditko art.

Disadvantage: If you're not careful, you may define your interests in such a general way that you end up collecting *everything* in a haphazard manner. Not many collectors today want to spend the time and money to assemble massive, general collections. In the last 15 to 20 years, prices and supply make it almost impossible for the beginning collector to build a truly representative, complete collection of the entire comic book field, so you're going to have to have some self-imposed limits.

So, what comics should you collect?

That's still a hard question to answer, especially if you're standing at a newsstand with 20 new titles begging to be read. And if you're ever at a convention with close to a million back issues clamoring for your attention and money, the first thing to collect is probably your wits.

If you're ever at a convention with close to a million back issues clamoring for your attention and money, the first thing to collect is probably your wits.

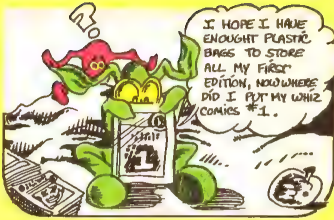
Keep the Collector's First Rule in mind: Buy only what you like. But always leave room in your collection and budget to experiment on a regular basis. Try a new title each week to see if it's worth adding to your collection.

Don't be afraid to drop old titles and companies, if they no longer interest you. After all, you're the boss when it comes to deciding what's important to collect and save.

Above all, don't neglect back issue comics! Sure, the new titles are exciting, and there are plenty of them to occupy all of your reading time. But the comic-book field is unbelievably rich, varied, and textured. There are comics published 10, 20, and 30 years ago which are just waiting for you to discover and collect them.

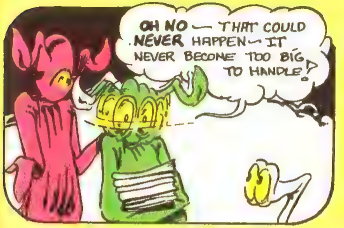
Maybe your only collecting goal is to get a complete set of all the Walt Simonson *Thor* books, or maybe you have a secret dream to own every #1 issue published by DC Comics. No matter. The comic-book collecting field is wide open for all approaches and all interests, and you will never run out of new and old comics to collect.

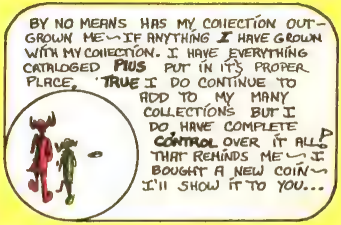
BUGS
LET'S SEE— I HAVE MY WHEAT BACK PENNIES OVER BY MY UNCANCELLED STAMPS WHICH ARE NEXT TO MY MAXFIELD PARRISH PRINTS...


I HOPE I HAVE ENOUGHT PLASTIC BAGS TO STORE ALL MY FIRST EDITION, NOW WHERE DID I PUT MY WHIZ COMICS #1.

OKAY NOW YOU DID IT! YOU WOKE ME UP WITH YOUR STUPID BABBLING.

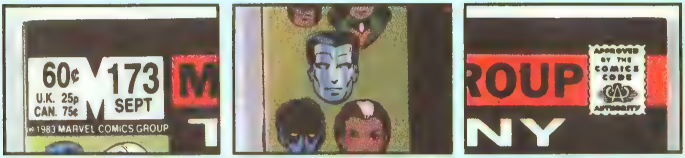
MY GOD MANUEL— JUST LOOK AT ALL OF THIS! DON'T YOU THINK THAT YOUR COLLECTION HAS OUT-GROWN YOU!


OH NO — THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN— IT NEVER BECOME TOO BIG TO HANDLE!


BY NO MEANS HAS MY COLLECTION OUT-GROWN ME— IF ANYTHING I HAVE GROWN WITH MY COLLECTION. I HAVE EVERYTHING CATALOGED PLUS PUT IN IT'S PROPER PLACE. TRUE I DO CONTINUE TO ADD TO MY MANY COLLECTIONS BUT I DO HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER IT ALL! THAT REMINDS ME— I BOUGHT A NEW COIN— I'LL SHOW IT TO YOU...

IN GOD WE TRUST
1909
LIBERTY
AND YOU SAY YOU ALSO COLLECT ANTIQUE CARS?
©NAVARRO

Photo Grading Guide



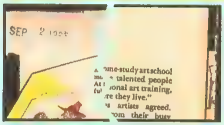
MINT: This is a perfect comic. Its cover has full luster, with its edges sharp and its pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging. It is not imperfectly printed nor markedly off-center. "Mint" means just what it says.

FINE: This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is no cover writing or tape repair. Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted. It is a good-looking issue at first glance.

GOOD: This is a complete or very worn comic book with nothing missing. Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are permissable — but there is no tape or browned pages. Older Golden Age comics often come in this condition.

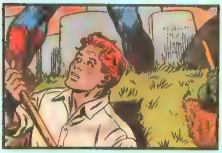
FAIR: This comic book may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, tears, and the like. It is an issue with multiple problems but it is intact. Tape may be present.

Color Guide To Defects



Stamped arrival date and ***off-center cover*** and ***off-center stapling.*** Minor defects. Some will not call it "mint"; some will.

Rolled spine. Caused by folding back each page while reading — rather than opening the comic flat. Repeated folding permanently bent the spine. *May* be corrected, but the issue is no better than "very good."



Water damage. Varies from simple page-warping to staining seen here. Less damage than this could be "very good"; this is no better than "good."

Multiple folds and wrinkles. No better than "fair" condition.

The problem of grading comics accurately is one which seems to have an easy solution. Theoretically, given a set of grading rules, determining condition of a comic book should be simple. Unfortunately, flaws vary from item to item, and it can be difficult to pin one label on a particular issue.

Comics Collector has introduced its own grading guide as a help to those new to judging an issue's condition. Readers are invited to use this standard, and advertisers may indicate that they use *CC* standards.

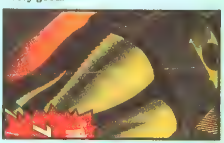
In no way is reader or advertiser bound to follow this or any other standard, but each is welcome to use it as a service which can clarify terms used in collecting.

The examples shown here represent specific defects listed in each case. The condition of the individual issue as a whole is not necessarily that of the specific defect. (For example, the copy with stamped arrival date, off-center cover, and off-center staple is *not* in mint condition aside from those defects.)

Stains. Can vary widely, depending on cause. These look like mud — but food, grease, and the like also stain. No better than "good."

Chunk missing. Actual piece missing. Couldn't be better than "fair."

Rusty staple. Caused by dampness during storage, rust stains around staples may be this minor — or may be more apparent. Couldn't be better than "very good."



Subscription crease. Comics sent by mail were folded down the middle, leaving a permanent crease. Definitely no better than "very good"; probably no better than "good."

Writing defacing cover. Marking can include filling in light areas or childish scribbling. No better than "good."

Tape. Extreme example of tape damage. Used to show *why* tape shouldn't be used on a comic book — or *any* book — for repairs. *All* tape (even so-called "magic" tape) ages badly — as does rubber cement. *Any* tape means "fair," at best.

Price Guide

Comics Collector Magazine's price guide is designed to provide information to the most recent values in the comic world. It is designed not only as a price guide but as an easy-to-use index of all the current titles. By using the abbreviations provided one can readily ascertain the leading artists involved in each issue, pertinent heroes, villains, and happenings. This format is suited to both the novice and student.

All major DC and Marvel titles are provided in their total runs, generally beginning with the mid-Fifties or Silver Age of comics, up to date. The super-hero is the main focus within the hobby and it is herein reflected. The current trends have been carefully studied and are revealed in these prices.

The prices reflect the current selling trend. Many collectors don't realize the fact that, in some regions and seasonal times, certain issues will be higher or lower than the rest of the collecting habits of the country. For instance, a certain artist might attend a convention where his work will be highly sought after and shortly thereafter the price on his art rises in that region. Economic conditions can play strong influence on prices. Areas with high unemployment will find prices dropping while other areas are rising. With the slower economic conditions, high-priced items and middle-value comics tend to drop or soften. The pristine older comic is always the exception to this. A new phenomenon has arisen in comics, this is the plethora of exciting new issues. Demand has been so great that many new issues rise in value almost immediately. Dealers' supplies diminish quickly and the values begin to climb overnight. Dealers cannot easily resupply a hot issue. This price guide reflects these new trends. No single source can provide a universally acceptable value to comics. Dealers' price lists provided a strong source, advertised buy and sell ads, auction results, and survey of comic conventions add to the compiling of the price guide.

Special mention must be given to **The Comic Book Price Guide,** by Robert M. Overstreet. This work, now in its 13th year, has been the main source of comic information. This book is a must for every collector. Doug Sulipa's **Marvel Comics Price Guide and Check List** is also recommended. Special thanks to Galaxy Comics, Norwalk, CT, Yesteryear's Collectibles, Ridgefield, CT, and Bob Sodaro for assistance in the index. Also recommended is Fantaco's **Chronicles** and the Marvel Comics indices by George Olshevsky and Tony Frutti.

THE PRICES STATED WITHIN ARE FOR NEAR-MINT COMICS. This is the most acceptable and general condition a collector desires for newer comics. The condition of comics is a must factor in comic values.

Comics collecting these days is more popular than ever with the advent of movie and television tie-ins and new titles that grow by leaps and bounds in value (such as **X-Men** and **The New Teen Titans.**) The reasons for collecting are multifold. People collect for investment (to keep the books to eventually be sold later), story, nostalgia (remember Green Lama?) or artwork and storytelling (by Frank Miller, Neal Adams, etc.) Whatever the reason, **Comics Collector** hopes you enjoy this very popular hobby in which its fandom is growing all the time.

ARTISTS ABBREVIATIONS

NA — Neal Adams
AA — Alfredo Alcala
JA — Jim Aparo
RA — Ross Andru
TA — Terry Austin
SA — Sergio Aragones
DA — Dan Adkins
JAb — Jack Abel
BA — Brent Anderson
MA — Murphy Anderson
MB — Matt Baker
CB — Carl Barks
CCB — C.C. Beck
FB — Frank Brunner
BB — Brian Bolland
RB — Rich Buckler
PB — Pat Broderick
JB — John Buscema
JBy — John Byrne
SB — Sal Buscema
SC — Sid Check
HC — Howard Chaykin
JC — Jack Cole
LBC — L.B. Cole
JCr — Johnny Craig
DC — Dave Cockrum
GC — Gene Colan
RCo — Rich Corben
EC — Ernie Colon
DD — Dick Dillin
JD — Jack Davis
MD — Mort Drucker
JDi — Jayson Disbrow
SD — Steve Ditko
GD — Gene Day
WE — Will Eisner
BE — Bill Elder
GE — George Evans
BEv — Bill Everett
RE — Ric Estrada
AF — Al Feldstein
LF — Lou Fine
HF — Harold Foster
MF — Matt Fox
FF — Frank Frazetta
MG — Michael Golden
FG — Floyd Gottfredson
FGu — Fred Guardineer
KG — Keith Giffen
PG — Paul Gulacy
BG — Butch Guice
DGr — Dan Green
DG — Dick Giordano
MGr — Mike Grell
MGu — Mike Gustovich
KGa — Kerry Gammill
RH — Russ Heath
WH — Wayne Howard
DH — Don Heck
FH — Fred Hembeck
BH — Bob Hall
CI — Carmine Infantino
GI — Graham Ingels
JJ — Jeff Jones
KJ — Klaus Janson
JKa — Jack Kamen
MK — Mike Kaluta
GK — Gil Kane
WK — Walt Kelly
ERK — E.R. Kinstler
JK — Jack Kirby
RK — Roy Krenkel
BK — Bernie Krigstein
BL — Bob Layton
JKu — Joe Kubert
JL — Jose Luis Garcia Lopez
HK — Harvey Kurtzman
RM — Russ Manning
MM — Mort Meskin
FM — Frank Miller
RM — Ruben Moreira
PM — Pete Morisi
JM — Jim Mooney
GM — Gray Morrow
VM — Val Mayerik
FMc — Frank McLaughlin
LMc — Luke McDonnell
AM — Al Milgrom
BMc — Bob McLeod
MN — Mike Nasser
DN — Don Newton
AN — Alex Nino
HN — Howard Nostrand
KN — Kevin Newlan
JO — Joe Orlando
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WW — Wally Wood
BWr — Berni Wrightson
TY — Tom Yeates
TD — Tony DeZuniga
MZ — Mike Zeck

Abbreviations
A - Appearance of
C - Cameo of
D - Death of
I - Introduction of
J - Joining of
L - Leaving of
M or W - Wedding of
N - New costume
O - Origin of
R - Revival of
V - Versus
1 - First appearance of
Rep. - Reprint
Thg - Thing
BM - Batman
WW - Wonder Woman
SpM - Spider-Man

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311 CI/KG, A - Capt. Boomerang 4.00
312 CI 4.00
313 KG, A - Psyhon 4.00
314 CI, A - Capt. Invisible 75
315-317 CI, A - Goldface 75
318 CI/EC, A - Ringmaster 75
319 CI/EC, A - Capt. Invisible 60
320 CI, A - Mirror Master 60
321 CI/AD 75
322 323 CI, A - Cremper 60
324-325 60
326 CI Trial 60
327 CI, A 60
328 CI, Grodd 60
329 CI Retold 60
330 336 CI 75

GREEN ARROW

1 DG, mini-series $1.50
2-4 DG 1.00

GREEN LANTERN

1 GK, O - Green Lantern $225.00
2 GK, I - Pieface 80.00
3 GK 60.00
4 GK 50.00
5 GK, I - Hector Hammond 50.00
6 GK, I - Tomar Re 25.00
7 GK, I - Sonestro 25.00
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10 GK 25.00
11 GK, A - Sinestro 13.00
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13 GK 13.00
14 GK, A - Sonar 15.00
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27 GK 10.00
28 GK, A - Shark 10.00
29 GK, I - Black Hand 11.00
30 GK 10.00
31 37 GK 6.00
38 GK, A - Tomar Re 6.00
39 GK 6.00
40 GK, O - Guardians 6.00
41 GK, A - Star Sapphire 3.00
42 43 GK 4.00
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45 GK, I - Prince Peril 5.00
46-47 GK 4.00
48 GK, I - Goldface 5.00
49 GK, I - Dazzler 5.00
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62 SA 3.00
63 MA 3.00
64-65 3.00
66 MA 3.00
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68 GK 3.00
69 GK 3.00
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71 75 GK 3.00
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79 NA, A - Wyteen Star 25.00
80 NA, A - Green Arrow 25.00
81 NA, A - Green Arrow 16.00
82 NA, A - Green Arrow 16.00
83 NA, GI, A, reveals I D 16.00
84 NA/BW, Green Arrow 25.00
85 GA/NA, Drug, Green Arrow 25.00
86 NA, Drug, Green Arrow 25.00
87 GK/NA, O - Green Arrow 7.00
88 GK, A - Green Arrow 3.00
89 NA, A - Green Arrow 15.00
90 MGr, A - Green Arrow 7.25
91 MGr, A - Sinestro 7.25
92-96 MGr, A - Green Arrow 7.25
97 98 MGr, A - Wrecker 7.25
99 MGr, A - Green Arrow 7.25
100 MGr, I - Air Wave 7.25
101-111 MGr, A - Green Arrow 7.25
112-114 Green Arrow 1.50
115 A - Controller 1.50
116 Green Arrow 1.50
117 JSa, A - Ally Green Arrow 1.50
118 CH Green Arrow 1.50
119 CH Green Arrow 1.50
120 CH, A - Kavi 1.50
121 CH/DG, A - Kavi 1.50
122 JSa/DG, A - Sinestro 1.50
123 JSa/FMc, A - Shark 1.50
124 1.50
125 JSa/FMc, A - Sinestro 1.50
126 JSa/FMc, A - Shark 1.50
127 JSa/FMc, A - Sinestro 1.50
128 JSa, A - Goldface 1.50
129 JSa 1.00
130 JSa/FMc, A - Sonar 1.25
131-132 JSa 1.25
133 135 JSa, A - Dr. Polaris 1.00
136 JSa, A - Eclipso 1.00
137 JSa, I - Cobalt 1.00
138-139 JSa, A - Eclipso 1.00
140 JSa, A - Green Arrow 1.00
141 JSa, I - Omega Men 10.00
142 JSa, A - Omega Men 7.50
143 JSa A - Omega Men 7.50
144 JSa, C - Omega Men 10.00
145-146 JSa, A - Goldface 75
147 JSa, A - Black Hand 75
148 JSa, C - Goldface 75
149 JSa, A - Katmatzu 75
150 JSa, anniversary 1.00
151 JSa, A - Goldface 75
152 JSa 75
156-158 RP 75
159 RP, A - Evil Star 75
160 NP, C - Omega Men 2.00
161 RP, A - Omega Men 2.00
162 165 RP 75
166 RP, A - Emerald Gladiator 75
167 1.00
168 Lysandra I 75
169 Lysandra II 1.00
170 60
171 AT, TA, "Counterflux" 75
172 The Verdict 75
173 75
174 A Flash 75
175-180 .75

GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW

1 Adams reprints $2.25
2 NA/DG #7 8, #79 2.00
3 NA/DG, reprints 2.00
4 rep #82, #83 2.00
5 7 NA/DG reprints 2.00

HAWKMAN

1 MA 4.00
2 MA 3.00
3 MA, D + 1 - Zatanna 10.00
4 MA 10.00
5 6 MA 6.00
7 MA, C - Atom 6.00
8 MA 6.00
9 11 15 MA 10.00
16 17 MA 7.50
18 MA, A - Adam Strange 7.50
19 MA, C - Adam Strange 7.50
20 21 MA 5.00
22 26 2.50
27 Wu (c) 2.50

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101 108 2.00
109 MK/Alx 2.00
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121 142 1.50
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170 172 1.25
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174 mystery format 1.50
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187 NA/MW/AT 1.50
188 MA/BW 1.50
189 NA/MW/AT 1.50
190 MA/AT 1.50
191 1.00
192 MA/GM 1.50
193 BW/MW 1.75
194 JW/BW/AT/NR 2.50
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196 MA/BW/MW 1.50
197 MA/BW/MW 1.50
198 1.00
199 MA/JR/WW 2.00
200 MR 1.00
201 1.00
202 MK 1.00
203 1.00
204 AN/BW 2.50
205 206 75
207 ISn/BW/JSS/NR 2.00
208 75
209 AA/BW/ 1.00
210 75
211 AA/BW/NR 1.00
212 AR 75
213 AA/BW 1.00
214 BW/ 1.00
215 216 75
217 BW/ 1.00
218 75
219 NR 1.00
220 AN 75
221 BW/MW 1.00
222 223 75
224 AN/BW/ NA, Phantom Stranger 1.00
225 AN/ 75
226 BW/ NR 2.00
227 AN/BW/NR 2.00
228 MA/NR/AT 2.50
229 230 2.00
231 BW/ 75
232 234 75
235 236 75
236 SD/BW/NA 2.00
237 240 75
241 NR 75
242 243 75
244 A - Spectre 75
245 AN 75
246 75
247 SD 75
248 249 75
250 MK/AN 75
251 NA/MW, giant 1.00
252 MA/AR, giant 1.00
253 NA/AR, giant 1.50
254 NA/SD/WH, giant 1.50
255 GM/AN/BW, giant 1.75
256 AN/BW, giant 1.75
257 MG, giant 1.50
258 AN/BW, giant 1.75
259 DN/MG, giant 1.50
260 261 75
262 JO 75
263 75
264 JO 75
265 266 75
267 AR 75
270 JO 75
271 JO/TS 75
272 CM/JO 75
273 75
274 JO 1.00
275 JO 75
276 SD/MW 75
277 HC/SD/WH 75
278 JO 75
279 281 75
282 ISn 1.00
283 JO 75
284 285 75
286 JKu 75
287 NR 75
288 75
289 292 JKu 75
293 Blu/OT 75
294 CH/Blu/GT 75
295 75
296 CI/JO 75
297 299 JKu 75
300 JSB 75
309 315 60
316 D - Andrew Bennett 60
317 60
318 Vampire 60

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4 JK 20.00

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4000 Announcements
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4005 Personals
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4201 Archie Wanted
4202 Archie To Trade
4203 Archie Mail Bid
4210 Black & White For Sale
4211 Black & White Wanted
4212 Black & White To Trade
4213 Black & White Mail Bid
4220 Classics For Sale
4221 Classics Wanted
4222 Classics To Trade
4223 Classics Mail Bid
4230 DC For Sale
4231 DC Wanted
4232 DC To Trade
4233 DC Mail Bid
4240 Dell Gold Key/Whitman For Sale
4241 Dell Gold Key/Whitman Wanted
4242 Dell Gold Key/Whitman To Trade
4243 Dell Gold Key/Whitman Mail Bid
4250 Disney For Sale
4251 Disney Wanted
4252 Disney To Trade
4253 Disney Mail Bid
4260 EC For Sale
4261 EC Wanted
4262 EC To Trade
4263 EC Mail Bid
4270 Fawcett For Sale
4271 Fawcett Wanted
4272 Fawcett To Trade
4273 Fawcett Mail Bid
4280 Foreign For Sale
4281 Foreign Wanted
4282 Foreign To Trade
4283 Foreign Mail Bid
4290 Harvey For Sale
4291 Harvey Wanted
4292 Harvey To Trade
4293 Harvey Mail Bid
4300 Independent For Sale
4301 Independent Wanted
4302 Independent To Trade
4303 Independent Mail Bid
4310 Marvel For Sale
4311 Marvel Wanted
4312 Marvel To Trade
4313 Marvel Mail Bid
4320 Science Fiction For Sale
4321 Science Fiction Wanted
4322 Science Fiction To Trade
4323 Science Fiction Mail Bid
4330 Timely For Sale
4331 Timely Wanted
4332 Timely To Trade
4333 Timely Mail Bid
4340 Underground For Sale
4341 Underground Wanted
4342 Underground To Trade
4343 Underground Mail Bid
4350 War For Sale
4351 War Wanted
4352 War To Trade
4353 War Mail Bid
4360 Western For Sale
4361 Western Wanted
4362 Western To Trade
4363 Western Mail Bid
4390 Golden Age For Sale
4391 Golden Age Wanted
4392 Golden Age To Trade
4393 Golden Age Mail Bid
4400 Silver Age For Sale
4401 Silver Age Wanted
4402 Silver Age To Trade
4403 Silver Age Mail Bid
4410 General For Sale
4411 General Wanted
4412 General To Trade
4413 General Mail Bid
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4480 Original Art For Sale
4481 Original Art Wanted
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4493 Big Little Books Mail Bid
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4501 Books — General Wanted
4502 Books — General To Trade
4503 Books — General Mail Bid
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4551 Fanzines Wanted
4552 Fanzines To Trade
4553 Fanzines Mail Bid
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4561 Periodicals Wanted
4562 Periodicals To Trade
4563 Periodicals Mail Bid
4610 Portfolios, Posters For Sale
4611 Portfolios, Posters Wanted
4612 Portfolios, Posters To Trade
4613 Portfolios/Posters, Mail Bid
4700 Toys, Games For Sale
4701 Toys, Games Wanted
4702 Toys, Games To Trade
4703 Toys, Games, Mail Bid
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4801 Fanzines Wanted
4802 Fanzines To Trade
4803 Fanzines Mail Bid
4900 Newspaper Strips For Sale
4901 Newspaper Strips Wanted
4902 Newspaper Strips To Trade
4903 Newspaper Strips Mail Bid
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4911 New Comics By Mail Wanted
4912 New Comics By Mail To Trade
4913 New Comics By Mail Mail Bid

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15 1/2 Page	270.00	253.00
20	350.00	315.00
30 Full Page	495.00	445.50

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All advertising orders are accepted subject to the terms and provisions of the current rate card Krause Publications, Inc., reserves the right to decline advertising or suspend advertising privileges for such periods of time as in their discretion they see fit, for any reason whatsoever, irrespective of the validity of the reasons for such declination or suspension. The forwarding of an order is construed as an acceptance of all rates and conditions under which advertising is at the time sold. The publisher will not be bound by any conditions, printed or otherwise, appearing on any order for advertising space, billing instructions or copy instructions, which conflict with its policies. Advertisers and advertising agencies assume liability for all content including text representation and illustrations of advertisements printed, and also assume responsibility for any claims arising therefrom made against the publishers. It is the advertiser's or agency's responsibility to obtain appropriate releases in any form of individual pictured in their advertising. All agreements are subject to strikes, accidents, fire, acts of God, or other contingencies beyond the publisher's control.

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Advertisements offering prizes, grab bags or contests of any nature, are not acceptable unless prior written approval has been obtained from the U.S. Postal Service, Washington, D.C. Advertisements offering modern copies, restrikes, reproductions of fantasy pieces which violate the Hobby Protection Acts are not acceptable.

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NUMBER of Words	1 Time	4 Times
1-25	$5.00	16.00
26-30	6.00	19.20
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46-50	10.00	32.00
51-55	11.00	35.20
56-60	12.00	38.40
61-65	13.00	41.60
66-70	14.00	44.80
71-75	15.00	48.00
76-80	16.00	51.20
81-85	17.00	54.40
86-90	18.00	57.60
91-95	19.00	60.80
96-100	20.00	64.00
101-110	22.00	70.40
111-120	24.00	76.80
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20¢ Per Word Over 150 Words

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Sample Word Count Ad:

Action #1 Mint offers over $13,000. Robert Schmall 700 E.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
State St., Iola, WI 54990 715-445-2214
10 11 12 13 Free Zip 14

CLASSIFIED REQUIREMENTS: Please print and punctuate. Not responsible for errors due to longhand or illegible copy. Abbreviations count 1 word each, hyphenated words count as 2 words. Zip Code free. Advertiser must file permanent or business address with publisher before placing P.O. box address ad.

PRINT YOUR AD HERE

Please insert the following advertisement under the # _____ Classification

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30

IMPORTANT — Include name and address exactly as you want it to appear. Do not use a box number as your address we require that your numerals easily — print non-plural name and street address

Number of words _____ x Number of Classification _____ - Total Enclosed $ _____

PAYMENT WITH COPY ON CLASSIFIED ADS

• Proof of Publication

Tear sheets of new display ads are mailed. We regretably cannot provide this service to classified advertisers and continue to maintain low classified rates.

• Typesetting, Pictures, Borders, Logos

All of the above services are available free along with custom layout of ads. Contact our advertising department at 715-445-2214 for details.

No. 5 Cover Ad Deadline Aug. 28
No. 5 Interior Ad Deadline Sept. 4

• Credit Cards

We accept the following in payment for advertising

VISA master charge THE INTERBANK CARD

EXPIRES: _____

MAILING ADDRESS:
Comics Collector
700 East State St.
Iola, WI 54990

159-170 O—retold 5.00
171 BA (P), A— Mouse Man 3.00
172 IN (P) 3.00
173-177 ..... 3.00
178 A— Supergirl 3.00
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181-188 DG 2.50
189 DG (I) 2.50
190-194 DG 2.50
195 WW 2.50
196 DG, O— All-Star S, 52 pp 3.00
197 DG 3.00
198 DG 52 pp 3.00
199-200 DG Jones (C) 7.00
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202 DG (I) Grey Mouser 2.00
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206 DH (P), O— WW 2.00
207 210 RE (P) 2.25
211 A— Superman 2.25
212 BA, A— Superman 2.25
213 BA, A— Flash 2.25
214 A— Green Lantern 100 pg 2.25
215 A— Black Canary 2.25
216 A— Aquaman 2.25
217 A— Green Arrow 2.25
218 KS, A— Red Tornado 2.25
219 A— Elongated Man 2.25
220 DG/NA, A— Atom, Chronos 1.25
221 A— Hawkman 1.00
222 A— SM 1.00
223 Steve Trevor removed 1.00
224 227 ..... 1.00
228 2 WW tales over A— Red Fazzer 1.00
229 231 ..... 1.00
232 NA, A— JSA 1.00
233 GM 1.00
234 ..... 1.00
235-236 Green Arrow 1.00
237 RB, A— E2 Flash 1.00
238 RB/GK, Sandman 1.00
239 RB/GK, Flash 1.00
240 GK, Flash 1.00
241 JSA/DG, Spectre 1.00
242 TM, Fate 1.00
243 team up 1.00
244-246 ..... 1.00
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248 A, L— S.T. Howard 1.00
249 Hawkman 1.00
250 I— Dorma 2.25
251 O— Dorma 2.25
252 253 ..... 2.25
254 A— Angle Man 2.25
255 261 ..... 2.25
262 RE (P) 2.25
263 A— El Gaucho 2.25
264 268 ..... 2.25
269 268 A— Anutol Man 2.25
269 WW (I) 2.25
270 ..... 2.25
271 272 JS, Huntress 2.25
273 JS, A— Angle Man, Huntress 2.25
274 JS, A— Huntress 2.25
275 276 JS, A— Cheetah, Huntress 2.25
277 JS, A— Batman, Huntress 2.25
278 JS, Huntress 2.25
279-280 JS, A— Demon 2.25
281 282 JS, V— Joker 2.25
283 Huntress vs. Joker 2.25
284 E 2 Robin 2.25
285 JSA, E 2 Robin 2.25
286 JSA, A— Huntress 2.25
287 DH/JRT, A— New Teen Titans 2.25
288 DG/AT/RT, New WW, I— Silver Swan 2.25
289-290 GC/RT, A— Dr. Psycho 2.25
291 GC/FMc, A— Zatanna 2.25
292 GC/FMc/RT, A— Zatanna 2.25
293 GC/FMc, A— Starfire Raven 2.25
294 GC/FMc, A— Blackbeauty 2.25
295-296 GC/FMc, A— Gen. Electric 2.25
297 MN (C), GC/FM, A— Gen. Electric 2.25
298 FM/DG (C), GC/FMc, Huntress 2.25
299 GC/FMc/JSA, Huntress 2.25
300 9 Artists ·· C— New Titans 2.75
301 302 GC/FMc 2.25
303 GC, Huntress 2.25
304 GC 2.25
305 GC Huntress 2.25
306 307 ..... 2.25
308 Black Canary I 2.25
309 Black Canary II 2.25
310 Huntress 2.25
311 317 DH 2.25
318 N 2.25

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1 HC/MA, O— Jor-El $1.50
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151 CS 6.00
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153 CS 4.00
154 CS, A— Bozarro, Joker 4.00
157 158 CS 4.00
159 CS, A— Dr. Zodiac 4.00
160 reprint 3.50
161 guest 4.50
162 CS (P) 3.50
163-165 ..... 3.50
166 CS (P), A— Superman 3.50
167-168 ..... 3.50
169 CS (P), A— Supergirl 3.50
170 reg. guest 4.50
171 ..... 3.00
172 CS (P) 3.00
173 174 ..... 3.00
175 NA, C— Flash 3.00
176 NA, I— Supergirl, Batgirl NA 5.00
177 ..... 1.50
178-187 CS (P), A— Green Arrow 1.50
188 reg. 1.50
189 RA (P), A— Luthor guest 2.00
189 ..... 1.50
190 RA (P) A— Luthor 1.50
191 RA (P) 1.50
193 194 ..... 1.50
195 196 RA (P) 1.50
197 guest 2.00
198 ..... 1.50
199 DG, Superman/Flash 1.50
200-204 ..... 1.50
205 Fiaretta ad, Teen Titans 2.50
206 reg. guest 2.00
207 ..... 1.00
208 DG, Dr. Fate 1.00
209 DG Hawkman 1.00
210-215 ..... 1.00
216 DG/MA 1.00
217 DG/MA, A— Metamorpho 1.00
218 ..... 1.00
219 DG/MA, A— 1.00
220 ..... 1.00
221 DG/MA 1.00
222 DG (P) 1.00
223 NA, guest 3.00
224 guest 2.00
225 DG (P), guest 2.00
226 DG, guest 2.00
227-228 guest 2.00
229 75
230 ..... 2.00
231 75
232 DG (P) 75
233-238 75
239-243 CS (P), A— Gold of Metal Men 75
240 242 75
244 MA/JLM, A— Robin 75
244 JLSL/MA/MN/TA/JS, guest 1.25
245 CS/MA/MN/JA, GM, guest 1.25
246 KS/MA/MN, JA, GM, A— JLA 1.25
247 KS/GM, guest 1.25
248 KS/GM, GK, guest 1.25
249-252 KS/GD, guest 1.25
253 KS/DG/MN, Shazam begins 1.25
254 GT/DN/KS, guest 1.25
255 B.G.L.A./SD/GD, Green Arrow 1.50
256 MA/DN/GD, guest 1.25
257 DD/FMC/DN/DG, guest 1.25
258 B.G./DG/DN/DG/KS/MA (c), guest 1.25
259 RB/DG/MR/MN/DN, KS 1.25
260 263 RB/DG/DN 1.25
264 265 RB/DN 1.25
266 267 RB/DN 1.25
268 270 RB, DN 1.25
271 RB, O— Superman/BM Team 1.25
272 RB (P)/DN (P), Kewpie 1.25
273 RB/DN, A— Plastic Man 1.25
274 GC, DN 1.25
275-278 RB, DN 1.25
279 RT, DN 1.25
280 RB, DN 1.25
281 RB, DN 1.25
282 RM/DN/GK 1.25
283 CT/RM/DN, Green Arrow 1.25
284 GT, A— Legion DC Crisis Begin 1.50
285 FM (C) /RB (P), A— Zatanna 75
286 RB (P), A— Zatanna 75
287 A— Flash 60
288/293 60
294 V— Tonahum 60
295 60
296 GC, Pantheon I 60
297 RA, Pantheon II 60
298 RA, Pantheon III 60
299 GC 75
300 RA A,BA, Outsiders, Titans 75
301-307 75

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12 JSn/BB 3.00
13 BB 3.00
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22 RB 75
23 CH 1st Russell art 75
24 CK 75
25 75

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2 NA .1.50

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GENERAL TYPE TITLES

These are common titles with no special artists or content

FUNNY ANIMAL

15c cover — VG or better .$1.25
20c cover — VG or . .1.00

(Continued on Page 86)

Convention Calendar

GREAT LAKES

STATES IN REGION: Ill., Ind., Ky., Mich., Ohio and Wis.

ROYAL OAK, MI - July 1 - Encore Con Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd., 10am-5pm, A: n/a Michael Lester, 16232 Carnage Lamp Court, Apt. 929, Southfield, MI 48075 PH: 313-557-3235

CAHOKIA, IL - July 1 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free, Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, MO 63118 PH: 314-772-1548

AKRON, OH - July 12-15 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Chapel Hill Mall, 2000 Brittan Rd., Thurs.-Sat.,10am-9pm, Sun. Noon-5pm, A: free, T: 100, F $50, Bob Bosnyak, 1030 Cling St , Akron, OH 44301 PH 216-724-9750

COLUMBUS, OH - July 14-15 - Comic & SF Show (C, Sf), Arlington Arms, 1335 Dublin Rd., A: $2 per day, John Piersky, PO Box 5440, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 PH: 412-371-1254

BOWLING GREEN, KY - July 14 - Comic Book Show (C), Bowling Green Mall, 9am-5pm, A: n/a, F: $20. Larry K. Holt, Rt 18, Box 544, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

LOUISVILLE, KY - July 14-15 - Semi Annual Comic Convention (C), Rodeway Inn, A: n/a Dusty Corners Book Shop, 947 Eastern Pkwy., Louisville, KY 40217 PH: 502-637-7975

DAYTON, OH - July 21 - South Dayton Comic Con (C), Moraine Gerhardt Civic Center, 3050 Kreitzer Rd., 10am-6pm, A: 25¢, F: $10 until June 1, $15 after, Dan Cooper, 3050 Kreitzer Rd., Dayton, OH 45439, PH: 513-298-0801

GRAND RAPIDS, MI - July 21-22 - Captains Comicon (C), Ramada Inn, 255 28th St. SW, A: $2. Kirby J. Tardy, 2007 Eastern SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507. PH: 616-247 7828

FINDLAY, OH - July 21 - Comic Show, Imperial House Hotel, 1305 W Main Cross St., 10am-5pm, A: $1.25, F: $30. T.E. Kessler Prods., 140 W 69th St., #121A, New York, NY 10023 PH 212-787-4003

TOLEDO, OH - July 22 - Comic Show (C), Ramada Inn-Southwyck, 10am-6pm, A: $1.25, F: $30 T.E. Kessler Prods., 140 W 69th St., #121A, New York, NY 10023 PH 212-787 4003

LAKEWOOD, OH - July 28-29 - North Con #1 (C, Sf), YMCA, 16915 Detroit Ave., 10am-6pm, A: $2, F: $45. Dave Balla, 20540 Loran Rd., Fairview Park, OH 44126. PH. 216-333-6630

CLEVELAND, OH - Aug. 4-5 - Saturday's Child Comic & Nostalgiafest (C, M, Sf), Richmond Mall, Wilson Mills & Richmond Rds., A: free, Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118, PH: 216-932-8596

CAHOKIA, IL - Aug. 5 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free, Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, MO 63118. PH: 314-772-1548.

ROYAL OAK, MI - Aug. 12 - Encore-Con Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion Hall, 1815 Rochester Rd., 10am-5pm, A: n/a Michael Lester, 16232 Carnage Lamp Ct., Apt. 929, Southfield, MI 48075 PH: 313-557-3235

ELMHURST, IL - Aug. 19 - Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540 PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

LOMBARD, IL - Aug. 26 - Relax-A-Con XXIII (C, Cd, Sf, M), Vet. Hall, 635 N. Parker Dr., 9am-4pm, A: $1, F: $19.95. B.J.'s Comic Corner, 260 N. Ardmore, Villa Park, IL 60181. PH: 312-834-0383.

CAHOKIA, IL - Sept. 2 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free, Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St. Louis, MO 63118 PH 314-772-1548

TOLEDO, OH - Sept. 3 - Comic Show (C), Ramada Inn-Southwyck, 10am-6pm, A $1.25, F: $30. T.E. Kessler Prods., 140 W 69th St., #121A, New York, NY 10023 PH: 212-787-4003.

NAPERVILLE, IL - Sept. 21-23 - Spycon II (U.N.C.L.E.), Sheraton-Naperville, 1801 N. Naperville Blvd , A: $10 until April 30, $13 until Sept. 10, $15 at door, T: 20. F. $30, Dutch Cole, 270 S Rohl Wing Rd , Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

ELMHURST, IL - Sept 23 - Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W Butterfield, A $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540, PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

BOWLING GREEN, KY - Sept. 29 - Comic Book Show (C, Cd). Red Carpet Inn, I-65 Interchange, 9am-5pm, A: free, F: $25. Larry Holt, Box 236, Walters Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42101, PH: 502-843 3587.

CAHOKIA, IL - Oct. 7 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St Louis, MO 63118. PH: 314-772-1548.

CLEVELAND, OH - Oct. 13 - Saturday's Child Comics-Nostalgiafest Show (C), The Somerset Inn, Jct. 8, 422 & 43, 11am-6pm, A: $1 50 Joe Tricarichi, 2520 Ashurst, Cleveland, OH 44118 PH 216-932-8596

WAUSAU, WI - Oct. 14 - Wis. Valley Coin Club Coin, Stamp, Ballcard & Comic Show (C, Cd), Labor Temple, 318 S. 3rd St., 9am-5pm, A: free, T: 50, F: $35 Harry Collins, PO Box 6, Schofield, WI 54476

LOMBARD, IL - Oct. 28 - Relax-A-Con XXIII (C, Cd, Sf, M), Vet. Hall, 635 N. Parker Dr , 9am-4pm, A: $1, F: $19.95. B.J.'s Comic Corner, 260 N Ardmore, Villa Park, IL 60181. PH: 312-834-0383

CAHOKIA, IL - Nov. 4 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St Louis, MO 63118. PH: 314-772-1548.

STEVENS POINT, WI - Nov 10-11 - Point Hobby Show (C, Cd), 51/10 Royale Best Western, A: free, T: 25, F: $125 Harry Collins, PO Box 6, Schofield, WI 54476.

BOWLING GREEN, KY - Nov. 10 - Fall Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Bowling Green Mall, 2700 Nashville Rd., A: free James Miles, PO Box 224, Bowling Green, KY 42101. PH: 502-842-6492

ELMHURST, IL - Nov 25 - Elmhurst Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), American Legion, 210 W Butterfield, A: $1. Graham Crackers Cards & Comics, 214 S. Washington, Naperville, IL 60540 PH: 355-4310 or 968-5250

CAHOKIA, IL - Dec. 2 - Spector Comic Club Show (C), Jaycee Hall, 150 Edgar, A free, Anthony Gladish, 3917 Ohio, St Louis, MO 63118 PH: 314-772-1548

TOLEDO, OH - Dec. 2 - Comic Show (C), Ramada Inn-Southwyck, 10am-6pm, A: $1.25, F: $30. T.E. Kessler Prods., 140 W 69th St., #121A, New York, NY 10023. PH: 212-787-4003.

PARK CITY, KY - March 8-10 - Con Cave Six (C, Sf), Park Mammoth Resort, KY 255 & US 31 W, A: $5 until Sept. 1, $7 until Feb. 14, $9 after, F: $15. ConCave, PO Box

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MADISON, WI - March 22-24 - WisCon 9 (SF), Concourse Hotel, A $13 until Jan. 31, $18 after. WisCon 9, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701 PH 608-251-6626

MIDDLE ATLANTIC

STATES IN REGION: Del., Md., N.C., S.C., Va., W. Va. and Wash D.C.

RICHMOND, VA - July 8 - Jubilee Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Holiday Inn, 6531 W. Broad St., 10am-4pm, A: $2.50, F: $25 Jubilee, 11910 Asbury Dr., Ft Washington, MD 20744 PH. 301-292-4587

GREENVILLE, SC - July 14 - Carolina Con III (C, Sf, M), Sheraton Palmetto, 4295 Augusta Rd. & I-85, 10am-4:30pm, A: $1, F: $25, Tom Littlejohn, Jr., 301 Edwards Rd., Greenville, SC 29615 PH 803-246-9674

WHEATON, MD - July 15 - Jubilee Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Best Western, Unversity Blvd. & Veirs Mill Rd., 10am-4pm, A: $4, F: $35 Jubilee, 11910 Asbury Dr., Ft. Washington, MD 20744. PH: 301-292-4587

GREENSBORO, NC - July 28-29 - Comic Book Show (C), Hilton Inn Airport, I-40 W & Jamestown Rd., A: $4, Tom Shamblin, PO Box 1267, Greensboro, NC 27402. PH 919-272 3262

TOWSON, MD - July 29 - Serendipity (C), Quality Inn, Beltway Exit 26 S, A: $1, Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301-398-6685

GREENSBORO, NC - Aug. 4 - Greensboro II (C, Cd), Holiday Inn Airport, I-40 & NC 68, 10am-6pm, A: $1.50, Ernie White, 2305 Hungary Rd., Richmond, VA 23228

ARLINGTON, VA - Aug. 11 - Jubilee Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Holiday Inn, 1489 Jefferson Davis Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: $4, F $40 Jubilee, 11910 Asbury Dr., Ft. Washington, MD 20744. PH: 301-292-4587.

BALTIMORE, MD - Aug. 17-19 - Fanex '84 (Sf, M), Hyatt Regency, A $15, under 12 $6, under 5 free, T: 90, F: $45 Fanex, PO Box 28282, Baltimore, MD 21234

CHARLESTON, SC - Aug 19 - Jubilee Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Marriott Hotel, 4770 Marriott Dr., 10am-4pm, A: $3.50, F: $35 Jubilee, 11910 Asbury Dr., Ft. Washington, MD 20744 PH 301-292-4587

SPARTANBURG, SC - Sept. 15 - SpartaCon (C), Holiday Inn, Jct. I-26 & I-85, A: $1, D.W. Howard, 38 Wall St., Asheville, NC 28801 PH 704-254-2103

TOWSON, MD - Sept 23 - Serendipity (C), Quality Inn, Beltway Exit 26 S, A: $1 Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301 398-6685

ANNAPOLIS, MD - Aug 24-26 - Phoenixcon 84 (Sf, M), Holiday Inn, 210 Holiday Court, A: $12 until April 30, $15 until July 31, $18 after Phoenixcon, PO Box 599, Arnold, MD 21012

ROANOKE, VA - Oct 26-28 - RoVaCon 9 (C), Civic Center, A: n/a, RoVaCon 9, Box 117, Salem, VA 24153. PH. 703-389-4900.

ASHEVILLE, NC Nov 3 - Asheville Mini Con (C), Sheraton Motor Inn, I-240, A: $1, D.W. Howard, 38 Wall St., Asheville, NC 28801. PH 704-254-2103

TOWSON, MD - Nov. 11 - Serendipity (C), Quality Inn, Baltimore Beltway, Exit 26S, A: $1, Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH: 301-398-6685

TOWSON, MD - Dec. 16 - Serendipity (C), Quality Inn, Baltimore Beltway, Exit 26S, A: $1 Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301-398-6685.

MOUNTAIN

STATES IN REGION: Ariz., Colo., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N.M., Utah and Wyo

LAS VEGAS, NV - Aug. 11-12 - Paper Americana, Movie & Advertising Collectibles Show (C), MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas Blvd., A: $1.50, The Show Factory, Box M33-8, Big Bear Lake, CA 92315. PH 714-866-8709

NEW ENGLAND

STATES IN REGION: Conn., Maine, Mass., N.H., R.I. and Vt

WEST HAVEN, CT - July 15 - West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10am-4pm, A: $2 donation, under 12 $1 Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516 PH: 203-933-3489

HARTFORD, CT - Aug. 12 - Connecticut Comic Convention (C), East Hartford Elks Hall, 148 Roberts St., 11am-5pm, A: $99, T. 40, F: $15 Harold E. Kinney, RFD 1, Box 218A, Andover, CT 06232 PH: 289-1208

WEST HAVEN, CT - Sept 16 - West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10am-4pm, A: $2 donation, under 12 $1, Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH: 203-933-3489

HARTFORD, CT - Oct. 7 - Connecticut Comic Convention (C), East Hartford Elks Hall, 148 Roberts St., 11am-5pm, A: 99¢, T. 40, F: $15 Harold E. Kinney, RFD 1, Box 218A, Andover, CT 06232. PH: 289-1208

BOSTON, MA - Nov. 17-18 - Dimension Convention (C), Sheraton, Prudential Ctr., A: $9 Sat., $7 Sun. Jon Estren, PO Box 400, Bronx, NY 10471. PH. 212-796-6275

WEST HAVEN, CT - Nov. 18 - West Haven Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Knight's of Columbus Hall, 263 Center St., 10am-4pm, A: $2 donation, under 12 $1, Harold Finer, 83 April St., West Haven, CT 06516. PH. 203-933-3489

NORTHEAST

STATES IN REGION: N.J., N.Y and Pa

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - July 14 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-224-9699.

LANCASTER, PA - July 14 - Serendipity (C), Treadway Resort Inn, Rt. 30, A: $1, Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921. PH 301-398-6685.

HAZLET, NJ - July 15 - Jersey Shore Comic Convention (C), Sheraton Inn, Garden State Pkwy., Exit 117, Rt 35 S, 9:30am-4pm, A: $1, F: $25, Mike Greco Coll Corner, PO Box 189, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. PH: 201-291-1632

VALLEY FORGE, PA - July 21 - Serendipity (C), Holiday Inn, King of Prussia Mall, A: $1, Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301 398-6685

ALLENTOWN, PA July 22 - Paper & Advertising Fair (C, Cd), George Washington Motor Lodge, US Rt. 22 & 7th St Exit, 10:30am-4:30pm, A: $2.50, D.S. Gallery, Box 4, Coopersburg, PA 18036. PH: 215-282-4269

BUFFALO, NY - Aug. 3-5 - Pyramids of Buffalo/Dr Who Convention (C, DW), Buffalo Hilton, Church & Pearl Sts., A: n/a John Zawadzki, 18 Hirschbeck St, Buffalo, NY 14212 PH. 716-894-6466

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - Aug 11 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free, Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-224-9699

CHERRY HILL, NJ - Aug. 16-19 - Pulpcon 13 (Pulps), Rickshaw Inn, Rt 70 & 510 until June 15, Rt 38 after Will Murray, Box 112, Dayton, OH 45401. PH: 513-236-0728

HAUPP, NY - Aug. 19 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, 1515 Vets. Hwy., 10am-4pm, A: 50¢, Denna, PH 516-724-7422 (6-7).

LANCASTER, PA - Aug. 26 - Serendipity (C), Treadway Resort Inn, Rt. 30, A: $1, Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH. 301-398-6685

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - Sept 8 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free, Steve Sabow,

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217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361. Ph: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361. Ph: 212 224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY - Sept 9 - Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: free Comic Comics & Books. 139 N Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

VALLEY FORGE, PA - Sept 15 - Serendipity (C), Holiday Inn, King of Prussia Mall, A: $1. Robert Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, Md 21921 PH: 301-398-6685

CLARK, NJ - Sept. 22 - George Asbury's Card & Comic Extravaganza (C, Cd). Ramada Inn, 36 Valley Rd., A: $4. George Asbury, PO Box 7, Clark, NJ 07110. PH: 201 667-3870

HAUPP, NY - Sept. 23 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, 1515 Vets Hwy., 10am-4pm, A: 50¢ Dennis. PH: 516-724-7422 (6-7)

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - Oct. 13 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361 PH 212-224-9699

ROCKVILLE CTTRE, NY - Oct. 14 - Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: free Comic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

MAZLET, NJ - Oct. 14 - Jersey Shore Comic Convention (C). Sheraton Inn, Garden State Pkwy., Exit 117, Rt. 35 S, 9:30am-4pm, A $1, F $25 Miss Grecco Coll Corner, PO Box 189, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. PH: 201-291-1632

LANCASTER, PA - Oct. 14 - Serendipity (C), Treadway Resort Inn, Rt. 30, A: $1, Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301-398-6685

WHITE PLAINS, NY - Oct. 20-21 - Baseball Card & Paper Collectible Show (C, Cd), Westchester County Center, 10am-6pm. A' n

a. F: $95. Gloria Rothstein Promos, 12 Chatham ST., Suffern, NY 10901 PH: 914-357-0643

HAUPP, NY - Oct. 21 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, 1515 Vets Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: 50¢ Dennis, PH: 516-724-7422 (6-7).

VALLEY FORGE, PA - Oct. 20 - Serendipity (C), Holiday Inn, King of Prussia Mall, A: $1. Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301-398-6685

HAUPP, NY - Nov. 4 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, 1515 Vets. Hwy., 10am-4pm, A: 50¢ Dennis. PH: 516-724-7422 (6-7)

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - Nov. 10 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212-224-9699

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY - Nov. 11 - Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M). Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: free Comic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

LANCASTER, PA - Dec. 1 - Serendipity (C), Treadway Resort Inn, Rt. 30, A: $1. Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH 301-398-6685

VALLEY FORGE, PA - Dec 2 - Serendipity (C), Holiday Inn, King of Prussia Mall, A: $1. Bob Horn, 4 Oak Rd., Elkton, MD 21921 PH. 301-398-6685

BAYSIDE, QUEENS, N.Y. - Dec 9 - Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Adria II Conference Center, 221-17 Northern Blvd., 10am-5pm, A: free Steve Sabow, 217-15 47 Road, Bayside, NY 11361 PH: 212-631-2025 or Mitch Nat, 200-34 45 Drive, Bayside, NY 11361. PH 212 224-9699

PHILADELPHIA, PA - Dec 8-9 - Dimension Convention (C), Franklin Plaza, 2 Franklin Plaza, A: $7.50 Sat ; $6 Sun Jon Estren, PO Box 400, Bronx, NY 10471. PH: 212-796-6275

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NY Dec 9 - Long Island Comic Book & Collector's Market Convention (C, Cd, M), Holiday Inn, 173 Sunrise Hwy., 10am-5pm, A: free Cosmic Comics & Books, 139 N Park Ave., Rockville Centre, NY 11570 PH: 516-763-1133

HAUPP, NY - Dec 16 - Comic Book & Baseball Card Show (C, Cd), Ramada Inn, 1515 Vets. Hwy., 10am-4pm, A 50¢ Dennis, PH: 516-724-7422 (6-7)

PACIFIC

STATES IN REGION: Alaska Calif., Hawaii, Ore and Wash

LOS ANGELES, CA - July 1 - Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd, A: $1.50 Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

CULVER CITY, CA - July 1 - Paper & Move Collectibles & Memorabilia Show (C, Cd, M), Veterans Memorial Bldg., 4117 Overland Ave., 10am-5pm, A: $2.50. Douglas Wright, PO Box 69308, Los Angeles, CA 90069 PH: 213-656-5470

SACRAMENTO, CA - July 1 - Comic Convention (C), Sierra Inn, 2600 Auburn Blvd. A fee Dan Houck, PO Box 887, Orangevale, CA 95662 PH 916-988-3989

SEATTLE, WA - July 15 - Center Con IV (C). Seattle Center, A $1. Bill Wormstedt, Box 2043, Kirkland, WA 98033 PH 206-827-5129

CONCORD, CA - July 22 - Charmworld Comic Heore Convention (C, Cd, M), Concord Inn, 1401 Willow Pass Rd. A $2. Alan H. Charmat, PH 415-930-0640

SAN JOSE, CA - Aug. 3-5 - Timecon '84 (DW), Santa Claire Hilton, 302 South Market St., A $15 until April 1, $20 until July 4, $25 at door Timecon '84, 1025 Jefferson St., Santa Clara, CA 95051

LOS ANGELES, CA - Aug 5 - Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Blvd. A $1.50, Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

CULVER CITY, CA - Aug 5 - Paper & Move Collectibles & Memorabilia Show (C, Cd, M), Veterans Memorial Bldg., 4117 Overland Ave., 10am-5pm, A: $2.50. Douglas Wright, PO Box 69308, Los Angeles, CA 90069. PH: 213-656-5470

FULLERTON, CA Oct 26-28 - 14th Annual Fantasy Faire (F), Griswold's Inn, 1500 S. Raymond Ave., A: $10 per day Peggy Conway, 1855 W Main St., Alhambra, CA 91801 PH 818-337 7947.

CULVER CITY, CA - Nov. 3 - Paper & Move Collectibles & Memorabilia Show (C, Cd, M), Veterans Memorial Bldg., 4117 Overland Ave., 10am-5pm, A: $2.50. Douglas Wright, PO Box 69308, Los Angeles, CA 90069. PH: 213-656-5470.

LOS ANGELES, CA - Nov 4 - Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wishire Blvd, A: $1.50. Bruce Schwartz, 921 N Gardner, Apt 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046

LOS ANGELES, CA - Nov 9-11 - SPERDVAC Old-Time Radio 10th Anniversary Convention (Radio), Viscount Hotel, 9750 Airport Blvd. A: $39 until Oct 9, $45 at door Sol Pavlosky, c/o SPERDVAC, PO Box 1587, Hollywood, CA 90078 PH: 213 254-8173.

LOS ANGELES, CA - Dec. 2 - Los Angeles Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention (C, Sf), Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wishire Blvd., A: $1.50 Bruce Schwartz, 921 N. Gardner, Apt. 9, Los Angeles, CA 90046.

CULVER CITY, CA Dec 9 - Paper & Movie Collectibles & Memorabilia Show (C, Cd, M), Veterans Memorial Bldg., 4117 Overland Ave., 10am-5pm , A $2.50. Douglas Wright, PO Box 69308, Los Angeles, CA 90069. PH: 213-656-5470

PLAINS

STATES IN REGION: Iowa, Kan., Minn., Mo., Neb., N D and S D

WATERLOO, IA - July 21 - Antique Collector Show (C), Machinists Union Hall, 1346 W Airline Hwy.; A: free. Rick Ducharme, 261 Gilbert Dr., Elk Run Hgts., IA 50707.

ST. LOUIS, MO - July 27 29 - Archon 8 (C, Sf, F), Henry VIII Inn & Lodge, 4690 N Lindbergh Blvd., A: $15 until May, $20 after Jam Bakke, PO Box 50125, St. Louis, MO 63105. PH: 314-773-3432 or Gene Yaffe, PH: 314-862-3970.

SOUTH CENTRAL

STATES IN REGION: Ark., La., Okla. and Tex.

DALLAS, TX - July 6-8 - Fantasy Fair (C, Sf, M), Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, LBJ at Midway, A: n/a. Building Productions, PO Box 820488, Dallas, TX 75382.

HOUSTON, TX - July 27-29 - Comicdar '84 (C), Ramada Hotel NW, 290 at 610, A: n/a. Southwest Conventions, 1103 W Tres Oaks #181, Houston, TX 77043

KENNER, LA - Aug. 10-12 - Vul-Con 10 1/2 (C), Airport Hilton, A' n/a PO Box 8087, New Orleans, LA 70182.

AUSTIN, TX - Aug 30-Sept. 2 - 1st Official Lone Star Science Fiction Convention (Sf), A: $25 FACT, PO Box 9612, Austin, TX 78756

HOUSTON, TX - Oct 26-28 - Min-Con "Halloween Con" (C, Sf), Ramada Hotel West, 7787 Katy Frwy., A. n/a. Mini-Con, 834 Regal, Houston, TX 77034

SOUTHEAST

STATES IN REGION: Ala., Fla., Ga., Miss. and Tenn.

MOBILE, AL - July 6-8 - GulfCon (C), Riverview Plaza, 64 Water St., A $18 until May 31, $22 at door Valerie Brister, PO Box 16966, Mobile, AL 36616 PH: 205-343-2596

BRISTOL, TN - July 14 - Bristol Baseball Card & Comic Book Show (C, Cd), Best Western Regency Inn, I-81 & 11W, 10am-4pm, A: $1.50 Ernie White, 2305 Hungary Rd., Richmond, VA 23228

CHATTANOOGA, TN - July 14 - Chattanooga Summer Comic Con (C), Read House, 827 Broad St., 10 30am-5pm, A: $1 50. Collector's Choice Comics, 23 N Ocoee St., Cleveland, TN 37311. PH. 615-472-6649.

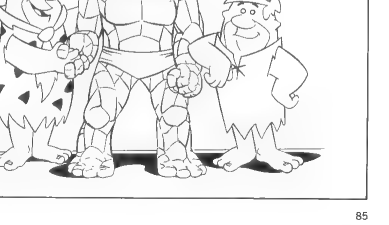
ORLANDO, FL - July 29 - Orlando Collectors Mini-Con (C, Sf), University Quality Inn, 11731 E Colonial Dr., A $1. Jim Ivey, 4300 S. Semoran Blvd ., 103, Orlando, FL 32807 PH 305-273-0141.

ATLANTA, GA - July 3-5 - Atlanta Fantasy Fair 10 (C, F), Omni Hotel & World Congress Center, Marietta St. & International Blvd., A: $19 until June 30, $25 at door. Lamar Waldron, PO Box 566, Marietta, GA 30061. PH 404-425-8095

ORLANDO, FL - Sept 22-23 - Orlandocon (C, Sf), International Inn, International Dr., A $5. Jim Ivey, 561 Obispo Ave , Orlando, FL 32807

FOREIGN

LONDON, ENGLAND - Aug. 6-11 - Space X 1984 (C, Sf), Westminster Hall, A: $5 per day Joel Spivak, 628 S. 4th St., Philadelphia, PA 19147 PH 215-923-7465



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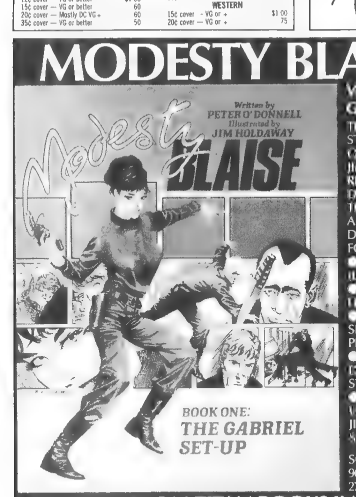

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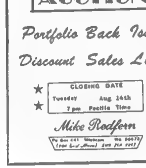

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